

CINEFANTASTIC

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Volume 13 Number 5



Maverick director
Jack Clayton on the
Disney backlot

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This Way
Comes*

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fantasy classic to life:
Disney's mega-buck gamble

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THE SENSE OF WONDER."

JUNE-JULY, 1983

It's not every day I get calls from *Time*, the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* and the *New York Post* (see page 63). To whom do I owe thanks for my sudden media popularity? Sidney Ganis, vice president in charge of publicity at Lucasfilm, that's who. With results like this, it's easy to see why George Lucas hired him as his press agent.

The trouble is, Sid, you were supposed to keep the plot of RETURN OF THE JEDI secret, not spread it around the country to millions of newspaper readers. George isn't gonna like that.

Our story last issue on why the title of REVENGE OF THE JEDI suddenly and mysteriously switched to RETURN OF THE JEDI (13:4:15) would only have been seen by the relatively limited following of this magazine, if it weren't for Sid. He blew his cool when he read the story (we sent him a copy, of course) and the press got wind of his bluster. Sid, the phone here hasn't stopped ringing. Thanks.

I feel kind of sorry for Sid, though. You can just imagine the pressure he was under as Lucasfilm's publicity spokesman, trying to put a good face on their title change. It's no wonder no publicity announcement of it was ever made. Lucasfilm was embarrassed enough just answering the phone about it.

Was the title changed because George Lucas couldn't make up his mind, as I suggested? Sid could hardly admit to that. Because "Revenge" and "Jedi" are mutually exclusive by definition, that would mean either George Lucas lacked a basic understanding of the meaning of his own film, or was greedy enough to ignore it for the sake of a more commercial title. Not good press, Sid

Lucasfilm's own official explanation was not much better: that the film's title was *always* going to be RETURN and that REVENGE was just used to mislead people. That kind of thinking is the height of paranoia, not to mention megalomania and stupidity. Not good press, either.

Frankly, I don't know which story is the true one. You could always ask Sid at Lucasfilm, but don't be surprised if he isn't in the mood for more explaining.

Frederick S. Clarke



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It took an unconventional director like Jack Clayton to bring the magic of Bradbury's horrific coming-of-age story to the screen.

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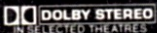
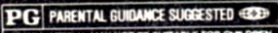
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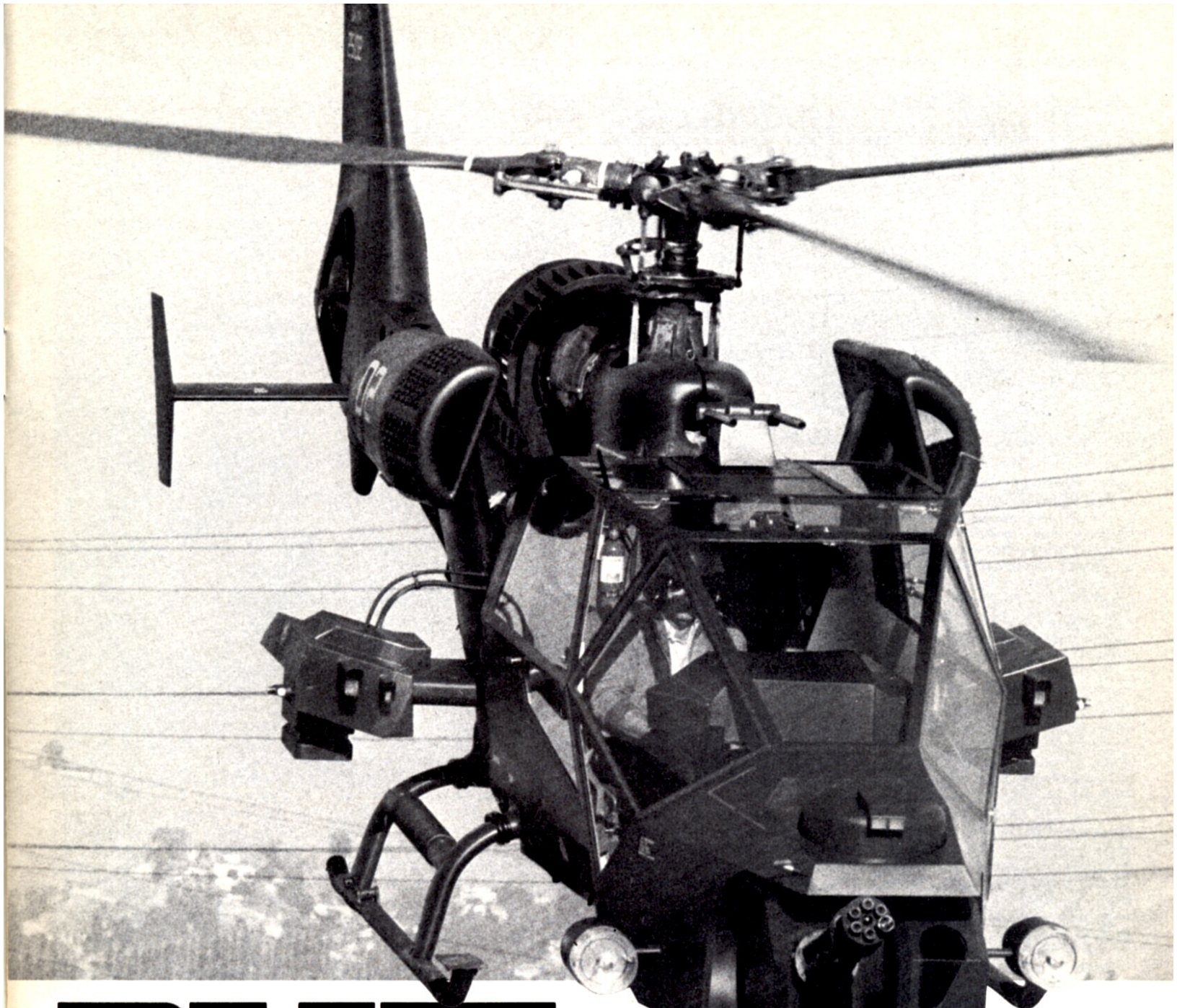
What would you
give a man
who could
make your
deepest dream
come true?

Ray Bradbury's

Something Wicked This Way Comes

RAY BRADBURY'S "SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES" A JACK CLAYTON FILM
Starring JASON ROBARDS JONATHAN PRYCE DIANE LADD PAM GRIER Produced by PETER VINCENT DOUGLAS
Screenplay by RAY BRADBURY Based on his Novel Directed by JACK CLAYTON Music Composed by JAMES HORNER TECHNICOLOR®
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COMING APRIL 29th TO A THEATRE NEAR YOU!



BLUE THUNDER

*It's the near future.
Do you know where
your ultra-modern,
super-sophisticated,
potentially dangerous
police helicopter is?
For the answer,
hold onto your seat!*

by Dan Scapperotti

A dark, silent shape hovers high above the streets of Los Angeles. Two men in the confines of the helicopter monitor the meeting of a group of conspirators inside the Federal Building. Thermographic cameras record their movements, while highly sensitive surveillance equipment reveal an incredible plot by high-ranking members of the military and L.A. Police Department to incite a riot in a local barrio. Suddenly, the conspirators dis-

cover the flying intruder outside their window and the chase is on in one of the year's most exciting action suspense films, **BLUE THUNDER**, released May 13

Roy Scheider (**JAWS**, **STILLOF THE NIGHT**) plays officer Frank Murphy, a tough but honest L.A. cop assigned to their Astro squad. Murphy and his partner, Lyman-good (Daniel Stern) stumble on a plot to incite urban unrest so that the powers of an ultra-sophisticated new weapon can be demonstrated under actual riot condi-

Blue Thunder, the super-sleek, charged-up chopper roars into action, ripping across the Los Angeles skyline.

tions. The weapon is Blue Thunder, a futuristic, high-tech helicopter capable of traveling at 200 mph and delivering 4,000 rounds per minute of 20mm ammunition from a multi-barreled cannon. The chopper is outfitted with the latest in sophisticated surveillance devices which allow audio-visual intrusion anywhere in the city. Thermographic cameras allow the pilot to "see



Director John Badham (c) goes over the script with Roy Scheider as Murphy (l) and Daniel Stern as Lymangood. Badham added good-natured comedic touches to the character of Lymangood whose JAFO hat stands for "Just Another Fuck Off."

through walls," while directional listening microphones can pick up a whisper a mile away and record all on audio visual tapes. The pilot's helmet is linked to the guns, which are controlled by the movement of the pilot's head for pinpoint accuracy.

Dan O'Bannon, whose screen credits include ALIEN, DEAD AND BURIED and DARK STAR, wrote the screenplay for Columbia Pictures' \$20 million production along with co-writer Don Jakoby. John Badham, who has helmed such diverse films as SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER, Frank Langel's DRACULA and the upcoming WARGAMES, was working on WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY? when he was handed the screenplay. In March, 1981 he began working with the script. According to Badham, "O'Bannon basically turned in the script and then had little to do with it thereafter. He was available for consultation. He wasn't barred from the set or anything like that because we had a nice relationship. He was on the set

when we filmed that demonstration scene of Blue Thunder, and was there for several days while we shot it. But any changes were made by me or by Dean Reisner."

Badham liked the original concept of the script, but felt that it needed "focusing, clarifying and some character development," so he called in Reisner, who had worked on several Clint Eastwood pictures, to help modify the O'Bannon-Jakoby screenplay.

"There was a group of people who were involved with this picture early on who thought that they were going to make the great statement about Big Brother in 1984," explained Badham. "But, that was never there to be made in as fresh a form as it should be made. It was always meant to be fun and when you read the script what you carried away was not that there was this deep, meaningful drama, but the fact that there was this one pisser of an action sequence at the end, and

fuck all this bullshit about surveillance and spying. I mean that's nice and has something to say, but that's not what our movie's about. Columbia Pictures wasn't about to spend \$20 million on making a statement."

The original script pictured Frank Murphy as a complete looney. Badham and Reisner thought that was a mistake and brought the character down to a more rational level.

Lymangood, Murphy's rookie partner, had about four lines of dialogue in the initial script and was merely a tertiary character, one of several that Murphy flew with. Badham built on Lymangood and used his scenes to tell the audience the functions of the L.A.P.D. helicopter squad. "You get to really like him," said Badham, "When he gets involved with Murphy, and then is killed, the audience gets emotionally involved. The things that would be emotionally important to Murphy would be important to you too. So when Murphy decides to steal that helicopter, there's a goddamn good reason for it. He doesn't know what he's going to do with it but he's sure as hell not going to let those fuckers have it, and just maybe he can expose what they're doing before they take it away from him."

Since Badham envisions BLUE THUNDER as entertainment, the carnage that would usually accompany a battle over and through the streets of Los Angeles has been toned down to the point where the film takes on elements of fantasy. For example in one scene, jet fighters try to track down Murphy, who successfully dodges their nasty missiles. While Murphy and his chopper hide behind a belching smokestack, a missile—missing its mark—plummets down the chimney

and blows a fried chicken restaurant off the map; however, no one is killed.

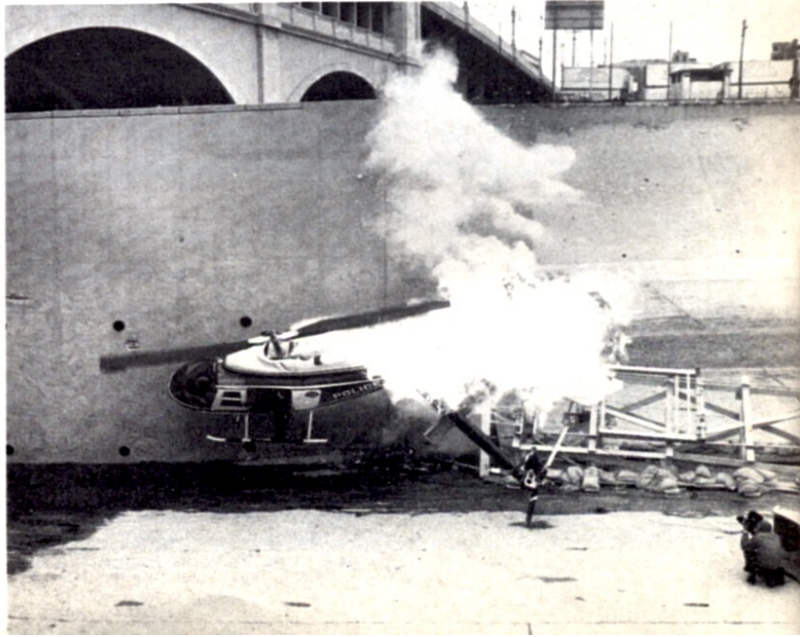
Badham feels that the sight of people getting hurt en masse puts too dark a complexion on the story. "It's one thing to write this on paper and to laugh and scream about it as O'Bannon did, but it's another thing to watch eight million people getting wiped out."

Further cuts of some violent scenes were made after early press screenings. One scene in which debris falls on (and clobbers) pedestrians below the skyscraper, the Arco Plaza, has all but been eliminated. Badham felt this scene was "too horrifying" for the type of film experience he wanted.

Another scene that has fallen on the cutting room floor had Candy Clark, Murphy's girl friend, trying to escape a squadron of police cars. They force her into an alley where she finds more squad cars rushing towards her. A chance meeting with a truck hurls her car sideways, allowing her to pass between the cops and the wall. Preview audiences refused to accept the sequence, having overdosed on similar stunts in THE DUKES OF HAZZARD, so it was trimmed. "Mind you," Badham notes, "no one, not a soul, complained about 2,000 chickens falling on the police when Amos' Barbeque blows up. No one complained about that silly scene, but they didn't like the car going sideways."

While the Blue Thunder aircraft is a creation of Dan O'Bannon's fertile imagination, all of its "wild" ultra-modern facilities actually exist. Badham points out that a short time ago a child, who was lost in the woods, was located by using thermographics. "They found a lot of coyotes and rabbits," Badham added. "But they also

Filming the crash of a pursuit police helicopter in the storm drains of Los Angeles. Mechanical effects supervisor Chuck Gaspar mounted a lightweight dummy copter on the rails of a launch platform. The copter was pulled at high speed with a cable and pulley mechanism that was looped through from underneath. The angle of the platform aimed the copter directly into the storm drain wall, and the copter was rigged to explode on cue. Multiple cameras recorded the effect at various angles.





located the little kid."

Phillip Harrison, the film's visual consultant, designed the helicopter, and then Badham had to come up with a machine on which to fit the design. A pair of 1973 Aerospatiale Gazelles (a five-seat transport made in France that can fly up to 200 miles per hour) were bought for nearly \$1 million each. The Blue Thunder plans and the helicopters were then turned over to Dick Martin, a specialist at designing unusual aircraft. Between Martin and the F.A.A. they came up with a dashing machine that could fly, even with all the super-modern (and super-heavy) gadgets, including a computer display terminal, a laser-bright searchlight and a video camera equipped with an infra-red filter.

To make the choppers look more ominous, Columbia Pictures technicians removed the entire cockpit and constructed a new cabin with flat windows and supposedly bullet-proof glass. Simulated surveillance gear was added on each side, and an all-black area (as contrasted to the chopper's basic blue matte finish) was added to the underside, using honeycombed material bonded to the craft's metal and filled with insulation foam, sanded down to give the appearance of armor plating.

"We had to get two helicopters,"

said Badham, "because if, God forbid, one should crash you don't want to be out of business."

Although both Gazelles survived the ordeal, a Hughes 500 helicopter crashed in a big battle scene with Blue Thunder. During the dogfight, several buildings take hits. A false front was added to a section of the Cornell Building to simulate 20mm gunshot holes going through it. When the battle ends with the explosion of the Hughes machine, a radio-controlled model was used.

BLUE THUNDER called for a plethora of special effects; miniatures, motion control, opticals and mechanical effects. Chuck Gaspar, who started his career with IN COLD BLOOD, and has worked on such films as ALTERED STATES, EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC and THE GAUNTLET, was hired to supervise the effects in BLUE THUNDER.

One of the most impressive shots in the film takes place when a missile, fired at Murphy and the Blue Thunder, misses and explodes upon hitting the Arco Tower. For this scene, Gaspar supervised the building (at the old Columbia Pictures ranch) of a mock tower, which rose 75 feet in the air and was 14 feet wide. Since damages from the explosions were to appear on two sides of the building, only two



Filming debris raining down from overhead cranes, the supposed effect of a Sidewinder missile hit on the top face of the Arco Tower in Los Angeles (left). Special effects supervisor Chuck Gaspar (near left) used snow plaster, balsa wood props and small pieces of breakaway glass for debris. Although the effect (above) required about a dozen effects men and took eight hours to film, it proved too gruesome and has been largely edited out of the film.



walls were built. Toolstone, a substance a little harder than Plaster of Paris, was used for the face of the building, and painters touched it up to give it a marbled look. Since the roaring wind factor at the ranch caused the building to sway, the back had to be reinforced with an iron framework.

"We also placed naphta gas mortars on the model which would be fired through a big tube to give you that fire look in miniature," explained Gaspar. "There are two explosions," he continued. "One is the initial impact of the missile and the secondary explosion, which is off to the corner of the building, represents the missile's concussion inside the building which blows out the other wall. Coordinating the two explosions and the helicopter was tough." An 18-inch radio-controlled miniature helicopter was guided in front of the building. Because of the small size, the man controlling the chopper had enormous difficulty; he lost control of two models the day before the actual shoot. A five-man crew was needed to set off the explosions in sequence. One crewman took his cue from the miniature helicopter. As the helicopter gets into position, the effects man fired his explosion and the others fired theirs right behind him.

Following the blasts that rip the

upper floors of the building, a mass of wreckage falls on the pedestrians in the plaza below. For this scene, the effects crew built two large tanks about 70 feet in the air and measuring 8x20x8 feet. "Pyroesel, snow plaster, which is a very, very light weight material, was used as debris," said Gaspar. "We also used some balsa wood, a lot of dust and small pieces of breakaway glass, just to get the glitter effect as the stuff comes down. This required about 12 effects men to handle the scene, which took eight hours to film."

Early in the film, Murphy and his boss, Braddock, played by the late, great Warren Oates, are given a demonstration of Blue Thunder's capabilities out in the Mojave desert. The weapon, they are told, was designed to handle any terrorist activity which may crop up during the forthcoming Olympics in Los Angeles. Thirty cars, a bus and dozens of cutout figures of pedestrians are spread out on the street of a fabricated town for the demonstration.

"We actually took the cars and cut them into sections," said Gaspar. "Some were cut into as many as twenty sections and put back together with little pieces of pine wood. We'd then explode the pine wood and have lifters behind them which would push the sheet metal covering away from the car, which makes it look like 30 or 40 pieces flying through the air. This made for a little different effect than the

DREAM QUEST

Visual effects for BLUE THUNDER could put this Culver City effects company on the map.

Wild cat-and-mouse chases between the super-charged chopper Blue Thunder and sleek F-16 jets will knock audiences out of their seats this spring. Responsible for many of these exciting effects, Dream Quest Inc., a 3½-year-old Culver City special effects house, is helmed by a six-man partnership, all close friends who worked together under Douglas Trumbull on STAR TREK—TMP. For BLUE THUNDER, Dream Quest provided the sequences involving the F-16 fighters, including the background plates shot from both the ground and helicopters, as well as the photography of the model miniatures. The company also provided shots of a Sidewinder missile which is fired from a jet, misses the Blue Thunder helicopter, and hits one of the Arco Towers. Dream Quest also supplied a sun reflection off the Arco Tower when Mother Nature didn't come through.

The company, which has credits including the simulated computer graphics used on datascreens in ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK and

BLADE RUNNER, matte photography in FIRST FAMILY and CADDYSHACK, and motion-control spaceship photography for CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: THE SPECIAL EDITION and the TV series BUCK ROGERS and BATTLESTAR GALACTICA, spent five months on BLUE THUNDER and provided 30 shots. Director John Badham and the Columbia brass liked the test shots of F-16 fighters flying over Los Angeles that Dream Quest made up for them, but negotiations between Columbia and Dream Quest suddenly stopped, and the studio went to another special effects house. When that didn't work, however, they returned to Dream Quest.

"But by this time six months had passed," recalled Scott Squires, president of Dream Quest. "The project had been underway for about a year, during which they had shot a tremendous number of aerial plates in all different formats—VistaVision, 4-perf, squeezed—none of which was usable in the model photography."

"The shots jumped all over the screen," Hoyt Yeatman, vice president/cameraman, agreed. "The problem was that the shots had been done from a helicopter. Since it was impossible to get FAA permission to fly a fixed-wing aircraft over downtown Los Angeles to match the 300-500 mph airspeed described in the script, the film was shot overcranked, at about 8 frames per second. That exaggerated every bump and joggle the helicopter made in flight. What the director wanted was a smooth, flowing motion." After considering renting a gyro-sta-

Left: Composite footage of Dream Quest's miniature F-16 flying over Los Angeles. FAA rules forbade the use of real aircraft for the film's aerial stunts. Below: Cameramen Bob Hollister (l) and Hoyt Yeatman film a background plate of the cityscape from a rooftop in Santa Monica. The model jet was composited using a new ultraviolet light matting system. Right: The F-16 miniature, built by Tom Pahk using a commercially available kit.

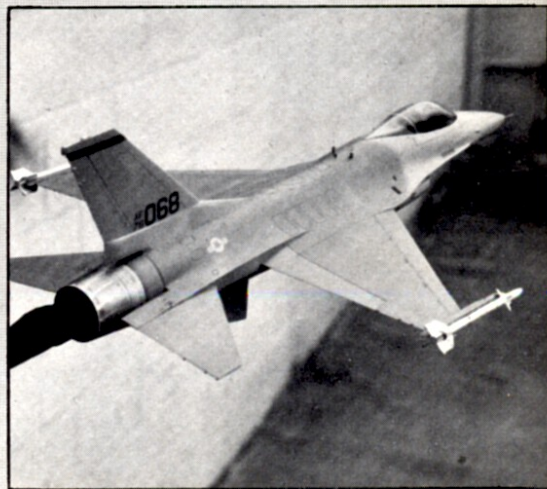


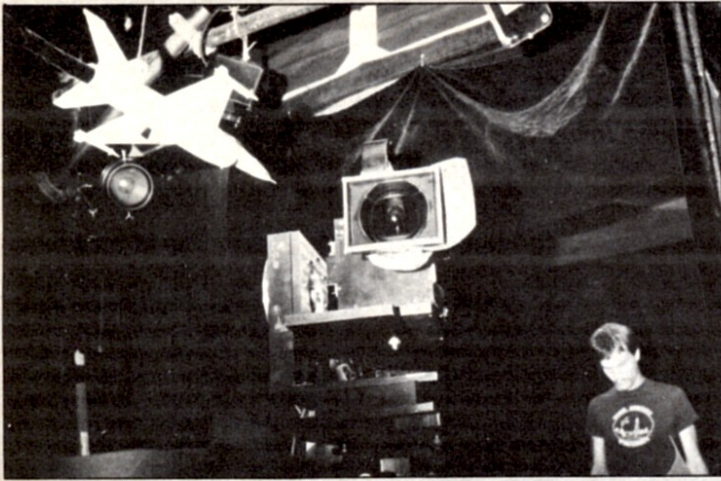
bilized helicopter mount similar to the one developed for THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, but being daunted by its cost, Dream Quest decided to use a Tyler boat mount in a helicopter. The gyro system—with its hydraulic fluid pump—and the camera took up most of the room inside the chopper, but the first test footage it returned was very promising.

"But at eight frames per second we were getting a weird oscillating panning motion which was caused by the yaw of the helicopter," Yeatman said. "Nelson Tyler, the inventor of the gyro system, built us a second unit to sit on top of the mount, and that stabilized

the camera."

With steady background plates of the aerial scenes coming in from helicopter pilot Rick Holly and helicopter cameraman Bob Eberlein, miniature photography of the F-16 jets proceeded. The models are 18" long and come straight from commercial Japanese kits. They were shot using the front-light/back light matte system and a technique, developed at Dream Quest, involving coating the model with ultraviolet-sensitive paint and filming it under blacklight. Dream Quest subsequently used and refined the system on effects shots for the CBS mini-series V and their current





project, DEAL OF THE CENTURY. It's very similar, said Squires, to a system simultaneously but independently developed at Apogee.

For Clint Eastwood's FIREFOX, Apogee developed a reverse bluescreen system as an alternative to traditional bluescreen model photography. Jon Erland, resident scientist of Apogee, came up with the new technique in which completed miniatures are coated with a transparent lacquer containing a phosphor that is excited by special ultraviolet lights but is invisible under normal or white lights. This special lacquer will not show in the primary pass under normal lighting, but in subsequent matte passes, the miniature glows when lit with ultraviolet light and generates its own matte, without the use of any blue-backing. This new process saves the time and money needed to optically generate mattes from a single blue screen pass, and is useful only with repeatable-move camera systems.

Dream Quest also provided an optical reflection that was an important story point: Blue Thunder escapes from certain destruction when a Sidewinder missile, fired by one of the F-16s, is more attracted to the sun's reflection on one of the glass walls of the Arco Tower.

Since the real Arco Towers are made of relatively unreflective dull black glass, Dream Quest provided a bright reflection by tracking the window on which the missile would impact, using a motion-control camera and a cross-hair. An operator joy-sticked the cam-

Left: The Blue Thunder hovers next to the Arco Tower. Dream Quest added an optical reflection of the sun off one of the building's windows, an important story point, in postproduction. Above: Scott Squires films a miniature F-16 jet fighter using a repeatable motion control camera (top). Hoyt Yeatman (bottom) films a miniature of the sidewinder missile fired by the jet, which impacts and explodes on the Arco Tower, attracted by the sun's reflection.

era into position to keep the window on target, and then the co-ordinates of the window were recorded by computer. The sun flare was produced by a tungsten-halogen slide projector bulb shining through a pinhole—and using the computerized co-ordinates—was matched into the rotoscoped footage of the side of the building. Multiple passes through the camera heightened the realism by adding a glow over adjacent windows and a sheen to the whole building.

"We mentioned that Sidewinders are heat-seekers, not light-seekers, and in fact that earlier the Blue Thunder escapes when a Sidewinder goes for a hotter object: the smokestack of a Bar-B-Que restaurant," Squires noted. "But Columbia wasn't very interested in what we were saying. So we added the Sidewinder passing the helicopter and apparently impacting on the tower. In reality, getting a glimpse at a Sidewinder is like seeing the bullets in the air when two cowboys duel. But directors want to see the missile in flight." **Kay Anderson**

usual hood or door flying off in a fireball. The scene took eight weeks to set up and shoot. Because of heavy rain in the area, we had to hire 25 local teenagers to push the cars into position because we couldn't get any equipment in there."

The super helicopter stolen by Murphy finally meets its end in a train yard. Running low on fuel, Murphy decides to destroy Blue Thunder and settles the helicopter down on the tracks in front of an oncoming diesel engine. To set up the shot, the real helicopter flew in and rested on the tracks, and then quickly rose and flew out. "We used a quick cut there," said Gaspar. "We took and put our mockup in there, which was made of foam, balsa wood and sheet metal. When the train made contact with the model we exploded it. We used a lot of black powder and naphta flakes which gives good red, fiery effects with lots of white smoke."

Relations between the special effects supervisor and the film's director were cordial, each handling his own sphere. "Badham would come to me and say he'd like to do something and then walk away from it," said Gaspar. "I wouldn't hear another word until we started shooting that particular item. He really kind of turned me loose."

Gaspar admitted that, "One of the things I really liked—because it was my first chance to do it—was to blow a car in half and have it continue down the road. That was kind of a neat trick." The scene takes place on an L.A. bridge when



The Blue Thunder demolishes test vehicles, prescored and rigged to explode by effectsman Chuck Gaspar.

Candy Clark is stopped by the police. Suddenly, Blue Thunder appears and opens fire. "We put two extra wheels on the car with a front wheel-drive engine and blew the back off, allowing the car to continue down the street."

The secrecy surrounding this production was quite intense; Columbia Pictures was shocked that even the title leaked out and refused to talk about the project. Badham admitted that they were afraid of being ripped-off by a cheap television production. "It would be easy to make an inexpensive version for the tube," he said. "It may not be any good, but if they get it out before you, then suddenly yours is the copycat. We felt bad enough that FIREFOX beat us to the punch; there is no doubt that everyone will compare our movie to it."

Columbia cleverly previewed BLUE THUNDER months before its release; positive reaction from the sneaks will definitely help when it goes head to head with its tough competition. □

Aerial cameraman Frank Holgate (inset) films the Blue Thunder while balanced on the strut of a camera helicopter, above Los Angeles. Director of photography John Alonzo supervised the film's camerawork, recording the film's action scenes with as many as ten units.



COMING

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Three people are dead, but Warner Bros plans to open the film despite the controversy.

By Donald Moore

Warner Bros plans to release *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* June 24 in theaters nationwide, nearly one year after a helicopter crash during filming took the lives of actor Vic Morrow and two child performers, Renee Shinn Chin, 6 and Myca Dinh Le, 7. Neither the crash nor the children will be seen in the movie.

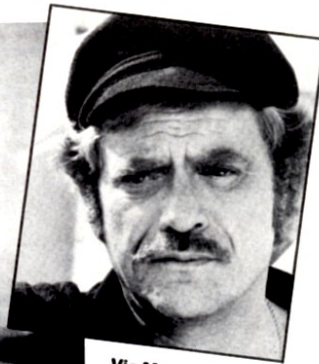
TWILIGHT ZONE associate producer George Folsey, Jr. refused to either confirm or deny our earlier report (13:2/13:3:9) of a provocative rumor that director John Landis may have been under pressure from Warner Bros to finish filming on schedule when the accident took place. The rumor suggests that the studio forced Landis to shoot an alternate "happy ending" to his downbeat script, and that the director was faced with the possible loss of creative control if he did not finish filming on schedule and budget.

"I don't have any comments on that," said Folsey, when asked whether there were two endings for the Landis segment. Folsey, along with Landis and Warner Bros was slapped with a \$5000 fine (the maximum allowed by law) by California Labor Commissioner Patrick Henning for alleged violations of child labor laws involving the two children slain in the crash. The fines are being appealed. Said Folsey: "I'm just not really able to discuss it, period."

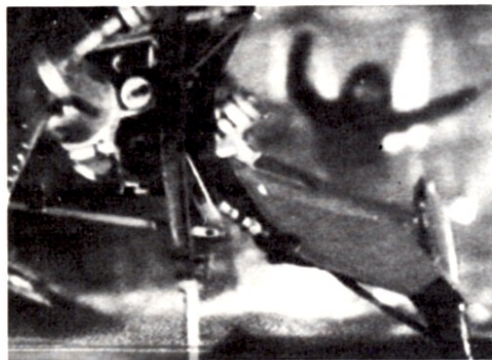
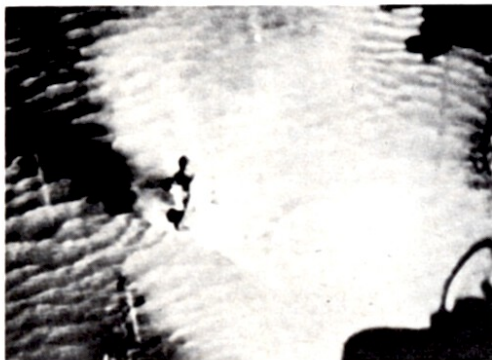
In December, outgoing California Labor Commissioner Henning issued a stinging, confidential indictment of the crash, uncovered and reported by *Variety*. Said Henning, "In the case of *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* tragedy we saw complete and absurd neglect of children, bordering on obscenity." According to a recent issue of the *Hollywood Reporter*, the filmmakers have already been hit with \$82,000 in civil fines assessed by Henning's office and the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration for "exposing children to hazardous working conditions and a variety of other health and safety code violations," all of which are being appealed.

Scripts, notes and other documents related to the July 23, 1982 helicopter crash have been turned over by Warner Bros to investigating agents of the National Transportation Safety Board. As we go to press, the Los Angeles District Attorney is seeking criminal indictments in the case before a California Grand Jury.

Part of the evidence being sifted by investigators is footage of the crash taken on the ground by director of photography Steve Lerner. The footage shows Morrow carrying the child-



Vic Morrow



THE CRASH of a Huey helicopter July 23 that tragically took the lives of actor Vic Morrow and two child actors, Renee Shinn Chin, 6 and Myca Dinh Le, 7 is dramatically shown in frame blow-ups of footage taken by cameras filming at the scene. Top: Morrow carries the children, one under each arm, into a river as wind whips the water and explosions go off all around them. Middle: The action as seen from the helicopter flying above them. Bottom: Seconds after the helicopter has crashed, director John Landis rushes into the water, seen behind the copter's twisted tail rotor. Warner Bros. plans to release *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* June 24, despite the grim controversy still surrounding the film.

ren from a riverbank into water, as explosions detonate and wind blows furiously around him. (The scene is Vietnam, where fate has cast Morrow's character as a "gook," victimized by America's scorched-earth war policies.) As the footage continues, Morrow trips, apparently in an underwater hole. Morrow rises up, out of the water, still holding the two children (top photo, above). Suddenly, the helicopter also filming the shot falls into frame, right in front of Morrow and the children (bottom photo, above).

The film is being scrutinized by investigators to determine the magnitude of the special effects explosions in the water that may have caused the helicopter to crash. The explosions in the footage go off with such intensity that the brightness of them com-

pletely whites out the picture for at least two full seconds. Investigators are also examining footage taken from the helicopter in the air (middle photo, above) which jerks suddenly when debris from one of the explosions may have caused the fatal crash.

As for the film itself, previews to gauge audience response have been held in Arizona and New Jersey. As a result Warner Bros shuffled the order of the episodes for a more effective mix. Director George Miller's segment, based on the old TV episode "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet," is said to be the film's standout, and is being shifted to last place, bumping an episode directed by Steven Spielberg.

Miller's segment features a monster designed by makeup artist Craig Reardon. John Lithgow, so effective in *THE WORLD ACCORDING*

TO GARP as the football player who undergoes a sex change operation, plays an airplane passenger who spots the creature damaging the engines. Stop motion animator David Allen contributes a cut of a winged creature flying away.

Spielberg's episode, based on the TV show "Kick the Can," is a gentle heart-tugger in the vein of *E.T.* about old codgers in a rest home who find that the secret of being young is acting young. Bill Quinn plays a sourpuss who refuses to go along. When Quinn finds children at play where his old friends used to be, he begs to join in, but it's too late.

Early reports emanating from the production had suggested that Spielberg would write his own story, to be scripted by Richard Matheson, instead of redoing one of the TV episodes. Three of the film's four episodes are retreads from the old series, including director Joe Dante's version of "It's a Good Life," in which Kathleen Quinlan plays a schoolteacher held in the tyrannical grip of a young boy with supernatural mental powers.

The film's only original material was written and directed by John Landis, who co-produced the film with Spielberg. This includes the film's prologue which features comedians Dan Aykroyd and Albert Brooks in a humorous skit similar in tone to Landis' use of knock-knock jokes in *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*. Aykroyd and Brooks play a couple of '50s characters cruising in their car. When talk turns to TV they begin to sing their favorite "theme songs," from Perry Mason to the trademarked "do-do, do-do" riffs of *TWILIGHT ZONE*. The skit segues into a full color recreation of the old TV-show's opening, complete with poetic narration by the late Rod Serling. Warner Bros denied that a tape of Serling would be used for a cameo appearance as we reported earlier (13:1:10).

Landis also wrote and directed the film's only original episode, called "Bill," rumored from the preview response to be the weakest of the segments. The Landis story is said to be preachy and pretentious in its handling of Vic Morrow as the bigot of the title who gets a supernatural lesson in love for his fellow man. It was during the last day of filming this segment that Morrow and two children lost their lives in July.

Steven Spielberg broke his public silence about the crash and its aftermath in the *Los Angeles Times* in April. "No movie is worth dying for," said Spielberg. "If something isn't safe, it's the right and responsibility of every actor and crew member to yell, 'Cut!'" □

THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER: DISNEY TO ANIMATE THE TOM DISCH STORY

It's certainly not your standard cast of heroes: a Hoover vacuum cleaner, an off-white AM clock radio, a cheerful yellow electric blanket, a tensor lamp and a Sun-

Character sketches of the titular hero.



beam two-slice toaster. The appliances have lived happily together in an old summer cottage, waiting patiently for their owner to return. But after two years, the appliances are afraid that they've been abandoned. Rather than wait to wear out like the old air conditioner, the plucky toaster decides that if they pool their talents, they should be able to reach their master's city apartment. Pets do it; why shouldn't faithful appliances?

That's the plot of *THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER*, science fiction writer Thomas Disch's award-winning short story which is now on its way to becoming a full-length animated feature for Walt

Disney Studios. The film is the brainchild of John Lassiter, a 26-year-old CalArts graduate who's worked at Disney for the last four years. "I wanted to do the story because I thought it had great potential for a modern Disney story," said Lassiter. "It's got a lot of heart and charm to it."

The film, which Lassiter hopes to have in production by the end of the year, will be the first full-scale use of a new computer animation process dubbed Synthevision, first explored by Disney in making *TRON*. If final production approval is given, Lassiter hopes to have *THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER* ready by the summer of 1985.

In addition, there is serious consideration being given to making the film the first full-length animated feature to be produced in 3-D ever.

"I'm delighted," Disch commented upon learning that his story was in pre-production. "The first movie that I have any big memory of is *SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS*—it threw me for a loop!, and *BAMBI* was one of the great role models of my youth. I even came down with a case of oral poison ivy when I went out and foraged on a neighbor's lawn after seeing the movie." Disch plans to publish a sequel to his story, *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars*, next year. **Michael Mayo**

STAR TREK I½ — THE TELEVISION MOVIE

STAR TREK—THE MOTION PICTURE was 12 minutes longer when aired by ABC.

By Michael Mayo

ABC televised an expanded version of *STAR TREK—THE MOTION PICTURE* that not only fills in many of the plot gaps, but is also an instructive look at just how badly the theatrical release was edited. (The television version didn't get off entirely scot free: it contains one of the worst bloopers in Star Trek history, shown right.) With the extra time available to television, 22 cuts totaling 12 minutes have been returned to the film and the results are fascinating.

In editing the film for theatrical release, often the beginning or end of scenes were trimmed to pick up the pace. Some of these cuts were quite crucial. When Kelley, Nimoy and Shatner gather in the officers' lounge shortly after Nimoy returns to the Enterprise, the scene ends with Kelley asking if Nimoy can be trusted. Shatner says he couldn't believe Nimoy would do wrong and turns to go. In the expanded version though, there's another line where Kelley stops him and says "How do we know about any of us?" Shatner's uneasy realization that Kelley is right is missing in the theatrical version.

Spock sheds a tear for V'ger, a crucial scene missing from the original film.



Another bad example of editing, this time in the middle of the scene, occurs when V'ger has just sent bombs into orbit around earth. Shatner asks Persis Khambatta for the reason and she answers that the Creator hasn't responded and that the carbon units are to be removed. Shatner again asks why, and she answers: "You infest Enterprise. You interfere with the Creator in the same manner." The TV version adds back the following dialogue:

KIRK: They are not an infestation. They are a natural function of the Creator's planet. They are living things.

ILIA: They are not true life forms. Only the Creator and other similar life forms are true.

McCoy: Similar life forms? Jim, it's saying its Creator is a machine!

DECKARD: Of course—we all create God in our own image.

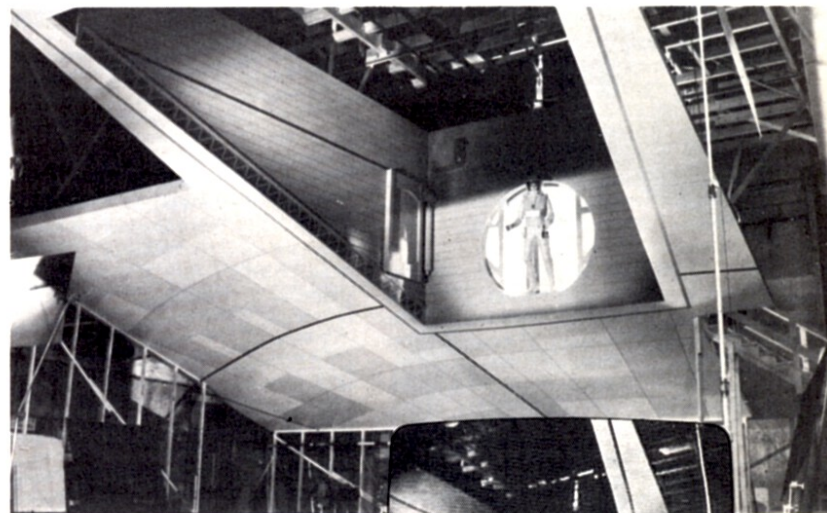
The scene ends, as does the theatrical version with Shatner looking to Khambatta and saying: "Machine? V'ger? V'ger?"

Probably the worst example of editing appears shortly after the Shatner/Nimoy hospital bed scene, when the Enterprise is approaching the honeycomb terrace that is V'ger's center. The missing scene is actually the heart of the film. As the ship is approaching the terrace, Shatner turns to Nimoy on the bridge and sees a single tear running down Nimoy's face.

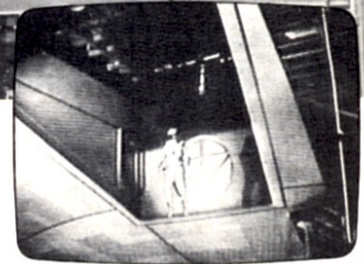
KIRK: Not for us?

SPOCK: No, Captain. Not for us, for V'ger. I weep for V'ger as I would for a brother. As I was when I came aboard, so is V'ger now—empty, incomplete, searching. Logic and knowledge are not enough.

McCoy: Spock, are you saying that you've found what you needed, but



Footage of the spacewalk (above) as it was filmed for the movie. Because the sequence was never used, the matte painting needed to fill-in the rest of the USS Enterprise was never completed. The scene as it appeared on ABC-TV (inset) when Paramount added outtakes.



V'ger hasn't.

DECKARD: What would V'ger need to fulfill itself?

SPOCK: Each of us, at sometime in our lives, turns to someone: a father, a brother, a God, and asks: Why am I here? What was I meant to be? V'ger hopes to touch its creator to find its answers.

KIRK: Is this all that I am? Is there nothing more?

One of the added scenes caused Paramount and ABC Television some embarrassment. The footage was taken out of spacewalk scenes that were first planned by Robert Abel to be a tour of V'ger's interior by Kirk and Spock. Kirk would come out of the ship and be attacked by tiny sensors from which Spock would rescue him. A million dollars was spent on the sequence before it was scrapped, including the spacesuit designs featuring a square helmet.

When Paramount re-edited the picture for television, they decided that a

transition scene showing Kirk going out after Spock would be better than just having Kirk suddenly out there as in the movie. The old footage was found and voila, Kirk goes out in one suit and comes back in the other. Unfortunately, the scene called for a matte painting that was never completed. If you look carefully when Kirk floats down from the airlock, you can see the studio rafters very clearly above the airlock, and to the right of Kirk, wooden beams bracing the huge set. Paramount post-production vice president, Mike Polacore sheepishly admitted, "That one just went right by us."

Paramount confirmed the long-delayed release of the film on video cassette will appear soon with the added 12 minutes, effects gaffe and all. It's still not everything that it could be, but after four years, *STAR TREK—TMP* is finally nearer the form it was meant to be. □

WAR OF THE LIVING DEAD

George Romero cries "foul" over RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD.

By Paul Gagne

RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD, a \$4.5 million film to be produced by Tom Fox and directed by Tobe Hooper, has been surrounded by more confusion than a shopping mall full of zombies. The film is a continuation of the concept of George Romero's classic NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (the dead returning to life to eat the flesh of the living), but Romero has nothing to do with it.

RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD was conceived as a property by screenwriter, director and novelist John Russo, one of Romero's collaborators on the original film. Recent reports published in *Variety* implying Romero is involved have prompted legal action by Romero against the producers. Lawyers representing Laurel Entertainment, Inc., the company run by Romero and partner Richard Rubinstein, have requested a title change and cessation of any further mention of Romero in connection with the project.

Laurel has begun preproduction on Romero's own sequel, DAY OF THE DEAD. This third installment of Romero's trilogy will develop further the faint glimmer of intelligence we began to see in his zombies in DAWN OF THE DEAD, to the point where they're able to function as slaves under the control of an elite group of dictatorial humans. The hitch, of course, is that someone has to feed them! Production is tentatively scheduled to begin in 1985.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD was originally based on the first part of a three-part short story written by Romero, who, together with Richard Rubinstein, went on to make a sequel, DAWN OF THE DEAD, the second film in a well-publicized trilogy that will conclude with DAY OF THE DEAD. Romero wrote the first part of the screenplay for NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, but when the onset of production took his full attention, John Russo stepped in to complete the job.

"George [Romero] and I signed an agreement stating that we both had rights on the [NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD] screenplay, since we co-authored it," Russo said. "We exchanged releases where I gave him the right to produce and distribute DAWN OF THE DEAD and he gave me the right to produce and distribute RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD." Russo's project can't be called a "sequel" under the terms of the agreement.

Russo developed the story for RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD with Russ Steiner (one of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD's co-producers) and Rudy Ricci (who wrote



George Romero



John Russo

THERE'S ALWAYS VANILLA, Romero's romantic comedy follow-up to NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD). It's ten years later, and the phenomenon is happening again. Religious groups and cults have sprung up with strong beliefs that the dead should still be allowed to rest before the final Judgment Day. Burial is now a tricky business and has given rise to certain precautions.

"It starts out with the funeral of a little girl in a farm house," explained Russo. "The funeral service is pretty ordinary until the minister hands the dead child's father a spike in the shape of a cross, and a mallet. He drives the spike through her head." (As in NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, destroy the brain and you've destroyed the ghoul.) Other groups have also sprung up, taking advantage of the breakdown of law and order to rape and loot.

"There are ghoul attacks," said Russo, "but we were more concerned with how people are behaving toward each other within the crisis situation. There's a story that weaves all of those elements together." Beyond the basic premise, Russo said that "we wanted to retain the gutsy feeling of starkness and reality from NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD but not have it resemble the other picture." A script for RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD was written in 1972 by Russo and Rudy Ricci (under the pseudonym Richie Valentine), five years before DAWN OF THE DEAD began production in 1977. Russo's novelization of the script was published by Dale Books in 1978, and is currently being revised for republication by Pocket Books.

RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD was optioned for filming in 1981 by Tom Fox, head of the Illinois-based Fox Films, Ltd., who later bought it outright in 1982. Russo, who directed MIDNIGHT, a horror film based on his own novel, released by Independent-International last year, was originally in line to direct the film. Recently, Fox put together a deal to do the film in 3-D with director Tobe Hooper (TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE, POLTERGEIST) for Orion Pictures, who raised money by pre-selling foreign rights to Hem-

dale Films in England. Fox hired Dan O'Bannon (ALIEN, BLUE THUNDER) to rewrite Russo's screenplay. Production is expected to begin in May in Los Angeles.

When George Romero learned of the project in 1981, he requested that Fox take steps to avoid confusion between RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD and any project that Romero might undertake—in the intervening years since NIGHT OF

THE LIVING DEAD, the "zombie" series had become clearly identified in the public's mind as Romero's. In the March 10, 1983 issue of *Daily Variety*, it was erroneously reported that "Fox, who had an association with Romero, acquired the rights from Romero and his Pittsburgh partners, and packaged the project when he brought in Hooper and O'Bannon." The story prompted Romero to denounce the use of his name and demand a title change to avoid further confusion. Letters were sent by legal representatives of Romero's Laurel Entertainment, Inc., to Fox and representatives at Orion and Hemdale.

The letters cite precedent in a case won by Laurel against Chicago film distributor William Links, who attempted to re-release the 1972 horror film MESSIAH OF EVIL as RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD in 1978. In that case, per Romero's legal counsel, "The court enjoined the use of the title RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD because the defendant [Links] had created an atmosphere where the public and the industry would be confused."

Russo is sympathetic to Romero's demand for an end to the confusion but feels his use of the title is justified. "They'd [Laurel] be saying that I don't have the right to profit to the same extent that he [Romero] has. I think we both knew when we signed the agreements that these are the risks that you take. Somebody might come out with something first, which George has done, and certainly I've suffered to that extent. That's a chance you take."

Meanwhile, Russo has his own dispute with producer Tom Fox over Dan O'Bannon's rewrite of RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD. "By the terms of my agreement with Fox, he can't give that screenplay credit to anyone else," said Russo. "I don't know how it's going to be resolved. I would have done as many revisions as were necessary. Nobody ever indicated that there was anything wrong with the script."

Adds Russo, "Whatever happens with this damned thing, I'm not gonna get pissed-off at George [Romero]. We're still friends. He has to do what he has to do." □

GREMLINS: SPIELBERG'S LATEST

Yet another hush-hush project from executive producer Steven Spielberg, GREMLINS has started filming at Warner Bros under the direction of Joe Dante for producer Michael Finnell (the team that brought you THE HOWLING). Script is written by 24-year-old Chris Columbus, an NYU film school graduate who submitted his script to Spielberg on something of a lark. Cast includes Phoebe Cates and Dick Miller.

THE KEEP: WALLY VEEVERS DEAD

The release of Michael Mann's gothic horror film has been postponed from June 3 to December, reportedly due to the death February 16 of special effects supervisor Wally Veevers, 65. The film's delay is surprising because opticals had been completed by Veevers concurrently with principal photography, which wrapped at the end of last year. Veevers, effects supervisor of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, began his career in 1936 on THINGS TO COME.

KRULL: NOT AFRAID OF JEDI

When the release of Peter Yates' big-budget Sword & Sorcery saga was postponed last fall from May 6 to July 29, Columbia emphasized that it was not over concern for the May 25 release of RETURN OF THE JEDI. The reason, per Columbia, was to allow more time to finish the special effects. Nevertheless, film was trade-screened, effects and all, in 26 U.S. cities on May 7, just one day after the original release date.

DUNE: EFFECTS BY APOGEE

Filming on the latest megabuck Dino DeLaurentis epic began April 6 in Mexico City. Contrary to earlier reports, rock singer Sting does not play the film's messiah figure, Paul Muad'dib. Instead, he appears in a secondary, villainous role. Other cast members include Max Von Sydow as planetologist Kynes and Jose Ferrer as the Emperor. Also cast are Silvano Mangano, Francesca Annis, Brad Dourif and Kenneth McMillan. David Lynch directs from his own script. The cinematographer is Freddie Francis, who photographed THE ELEPHANT MAN for Lynch. Special effects will be provided by John Dykstra's Apogee (FJRE-FOX), and not ILM, as previously reported here.

JAWS 3-D

A new director finds new dimensions in the carnivorous return of the toothy behemoth.

By Nancy Mills

Just when you thought it was safe to go into a movie theater... there's a shark in your lap.

One of the chief reasons for making the new JAWS sequel in 3-D is to have a shark jump out of the screen. It's a natural. Everyone at Universal and the producing Alan Landsburg Company said so. But they didn't say it would be easy: the 3-D process is still far from being perfected.

JAWS 3-D is a production marked by firsts. It's the first time a cinematographer will film underwater in 3-D. It is the first production in which Arriflex will use its new 3-D camera system. And it's the first film that former production designer Joe Alves will direct.

"Boy, was I naive about where the 3-D state of the art was," said Alves, who has been working for more than a year on this second sequel. As production designer for the two earlier JAWS movies and second-unit director of JAWS II, Alves figured he had the natural vehicle for making his directing debut.

"The D takes the onus off the 3," he said. "At the time we started planning it, which was before ROCKY III came out, a second sequel seemed not a good idea. But JAWS looked like a perfect subject for 3-D."

Alves said his film, due for July release and starring Dennis Quaid, Louis Gossett Jr. and Bess Armstrong, has few similarities with the two predecessors. Besides being in 3-D, the \$15 million project—the most expensive 3-D film ever—has a different look and tone.

"I think JAWS 3-D is much more of a fantasy movie than the other two JAWS," he said. "The idea of JAWS I was to shoot the ocean and a large mechanical object—it had a real nat-

ural look. I wanted to have several distinct looks for my film. For example, we have a very nice, golden, transitional look in the dusk and dawn shots, but when the shark attacks, the look becomes very ominous, very scary."

The Carl Gottlieb screenplay is set at a "fantasized Sea World," a huge aquatic park along the Florida Coast. The day before the park is to open, a great white shark swims into the lagoon. Gossett plays a developer who hires Quaid to build the park. Quaid's character is the grown-up son of the Amity police chief played in the earlier films by Roy Scheider.

"JAWS I and JAWS 2 were brutal films to make," recalled Alves. "We were out fighting the ocean with a big, mechanical shark. It was painful. For JAWS 3-D we protected ourselves by not going to the ocean." The shark scenes will be filmed in a 1.6 million gallon tank at Sea World in Orlando.

Alves admitted that he was hired as director because of his past experiences with the two JAWS films and his extensive production design work. "I was obviously picked because of my mechanical abilities," Alves stated. "But I didn't want JAWS 3-D to turn into an object picture. Since I spent so many years as a designer, I can now put those skills away and let them come naturally."

Alves said he had few problems slipping into his new position as director—in fact it looks like JAWS 3-D will finish on schedule and close to its \$15 million budget.

"I had no problems with the shark effects," he boasted. "When I started on the picture, I was very focused on its visual look. Now, I'm concentrating on the actors. I decided if that's my shortcoming, I'd cast actors with ability and lack of temperament. That's



Joe Alves directs (l-to-r) Kathy Jenkins, Jane Horner, and Kathy Cervenka as a tentacled exhibit at Sea World's Underwater Kingdom pokes fun at the 3-D camera.



Director Joe Alves.

made my life much easier. I didn't want to have to deal with 3-D, production problems and actors who didn't want to go to work."

Neither Alves nor director of photography Jim Contner had worked with 3-D before. "Filming in 3-D involves a whole new way of thinking," notes Contner. "One mistake a lot of productions make is they don't design for 3-D. They design for a conventional film."

JAWS 3-D got off to a rocky start, admits producer Hitzig. "Those first two weeks we were experimenting on company time," he said. "We were trying to make the medium fit the message. In a 3-D movie, three-dimensionality takes priority because people have expectations over traditional filmmaking techniques. So the clash was how do we make the film and still satisfy the dimensional quality? Deciding was a very long and arduous process."

Part of the problem was that they couldn't get the 3-D camera they wanted until several weeks after filming started. "We did lots of testing and found that the single-camera systems used on other pictures weren't suitable, and the two-camera system didn't give us the fluidity we wanted," explained Alves.

Alves chose Arriflex's new Arrivision system, which was still in development. "I'd hoped to have a lot of time to do tests," notes Contner. "But the day before shooting we still didn't have a camera. So we started with another system. Then about two weeks into the picture we got the Arrivision. We had to reshoot a lot of the stuff we'd started with."

In addition to the camera system, Arriflex also provided the film with 3-D technical supervisor Stan Loth. A Polish cameraman who emigrated to the United States 18 months ago,

Loth helped develop Arrivision. He was continually available on the set to answer questions and give advice.

"It took us awhile to adapt ourselves to the advantages of 3-D," observed Alves. "We had to learn the language. Now it's not so restrictive. It's wonderful to be able to stack the actors for a 3-D quality."

Alves does not intend to make JAWS 3-D simply a gimmick movie. "It's always been my intention to make this movie restful to the eye," he explained. "When it's dramatically correct we will bring things out to the audience. But that can be a tremendous strain on the eyes. We'll use those effects sparingly—dramatically in about eight places and humorously in about eight more. There will be long periods without effects."

However, 3-D audiences needn't despair for there will be some eye-popping effects, including a walrus spitting into the audience, a seal sliding across the floor into the audience and some dramatic shark lunges.

But Alves doesn't plan any cheap shots. As he says, "This movie doesn't have to be 3-D to be successful." □

The 1.6 million gallon underwater shoot tank specially built for JAWS 3-D at Sea World in Orlando, Florida, used for filming shark attack effects in 3-D.



NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN

Warner Bros takes a dive in the pitched 'Battle of the Bonds.'

Citing vague "postproduction problems," Warner Bros has quietly scratched the summer opening of NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN. The release of the film—said to be way over budget and currently under the scrutiny of auditors—has been delayed at least until the early fall.



Sean Connery

The hotly-anticipated film—which will mark Sean Connery's return as secret agent James Bond after a 12-year absence—was originally scheduled to open a few weeks after MGM/UA's own Bond picture, OCTOPUSSY, setting up a confrontation that had both films battling in the courts and jockeying for position with exhibitors.

Although studio publicists were claiming as late as early May that the film would be released on schedule July 16, industry insiders knew by mid-March that the film was in difficulty and would likely be delayed.

Although trouble with the film's effects is the "official" cause of the delay, a spokesman for John Dykstra's Apogee—the effects house handling the bulk of miniature and optical work—reported their work was on-time, and would have been ready for the mid-July opening. Indeed, executive producer Jack Schwartzman, reached in London through a representative, insisted that Apogee was not to blame for the film's budget and scheduling woes. Schwartzman refused to comment further.

Trade speculation on the troubled production continues furiously, however. Sources at MGM/UA—distributors for rival OCTOPUSSY—felt the Warners decision was based on fear of head-to-head competition with the Roger Moore film. "We hear they're changing their marketing strategy," our source told us. "They're looking at OCTOPUSSY as a multi-million dollar advertisement for James Bond. If our film is good, everyone will itch for more. If it stinks, everybody will want to see the real James Bond [Connery]."

The strategy, if true, ignores the fact that the Bond films are traditionally released in the summer, the peak season for repeat teenage business, the key demographic group for the series' action-adventure formula. In addition, early handicappers pegged NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN (directed by Irvin Kershner) to perform better than OCTOPUSSY, at least in the United States. □

THE SCORE / *He's a low-budget one-man Band*

By Randall D. Larson

Unlike the frequently monotonous electronic dabbings and noisy cacophonous scores that often grace low-budget horror pictures, the music of Richard H. Band is remarkably broad in orchestration and structure, and effectively underscores the emotional themes as well as the horror.

Raised in Europe, Band is the son of producer/director/writer Albert Band (who made 1958's I BURY THE LIVING) and discovered his interest in music while attending a Flamenco show in Spain when he was ten years old. Band spent the next seven years becoming a self-taught musician, until returning to the United States where he received formal musical training. When his brother, Charles Band, started to produce films in 1977, he brought Richard in to provide the music.

Band's first effort was a synthesizer score for LASERBLAST, which he co-scored in only five days with another newcomer, composer Jerry Goldsmith's son, Joel. Band's next score was a carefully structured and richly orchestral one for THE DAY TIME ENDED, which was followed by effective compositions for DR. HECKLE AND MR. HYPE and the futuristic PARASITE. Band's latest work can be heard in a pair of low-budget thrillers making the rounds: Film Venture's stalk-and-bash THE HOUSE ON SORORITY ROW, and New World's mummified "Close Encounters," TIME WALKER.

Band describes his personal approach to film scoring as an attempt to supply the third dimension in a basically two-dimensional medium. "I view music as the emotional dimension," Band said. "I try to get to what I consider to be the meat of a story." While many of the effects-laden science fiction films he has worked on may be considered "hardware movies," Band avoids the clichéd musical gimmicks of such films.

Band was recommended to score THE HOUSE ON SORORITY ROW by Irwin Yablans, the producer or distributor of many of the composer's previous films. While most of Band's previous genre efforts dealt with science fiction, here he had to score a very conventional countryside setting with a small group of coeds being methodically eradicated by a psychotic, cane-wielding Sorority House Mother. Band wisely chose to avoid an electronic-like score (like John Carpenter's once-original HALLOWEEN) and instead provided a richly orchestral score dominated



Composer Richard H. Band conducts the London Symphony Orchestra.

by a slow, sustained three-note motif. "My idea was to get as far away from effect music as I could," Band said.

Band composed a music box motif, playing a variation on the main theme, which figures prominently in the film as a trigger for the actions of the killer. The tinkling sound of the music box attracts the stalking psycho, and at the same time suggests what is going on within that sinister, prowling figure. The music box motif, and another variation for child-like voices, all emphasize the mother-child relationship between the House Mother and her apparently stillborn child, a relationship which is not clearly realized until the film's climax.

"I played with the audience," Band explained. "In the sense of what is called a flash forward in visual terms, I used a 'flash forward' in musical terms, letting the audience in, on an emotional basis, on what the real story was behind the goings on."

This isn't to say that Band's music didn't emphasize the film's numerous killings, but he did not approach the score from a purely illustrative standpoint. "There are many composers who really view scoring movies as a form of illustration," said Band. "I don't regard it as such in the least. I view film scoring as an art form, not formula system." Band utilized low brass and woodwind, and a sparse synthesizer, for the suspense and murder scenes, as well as a number of remarkably fluid string passages. The score balances a rich, lush main theme for the Sorority House and its eerie variation for the killer, with a variety of non-melodic, atonal stalking motifs.

The score is written in what is called a 12-tone technique, a method of atonal composition in which melody, harmony and tonal-

ity is based upon a unified twelve-tone chromatic scale, with each note potentially equal. "Too many people have taken advantage of the idea that 12-tone and atonal music supposedly doesn't sound harmonic," said Band. "Twelve-tone music can sound very harmonic."

Band was given three-and-a-half weeks to compose the score, after which he spent a week in England recording it, in three sessions, with the London Symphony Orchestra. While this normally is a very large orchestra, Band utilized fewer than 40 musicians in his recording sessions, necessitating careful orchestration to achieve the fullness of sound that he wanted.

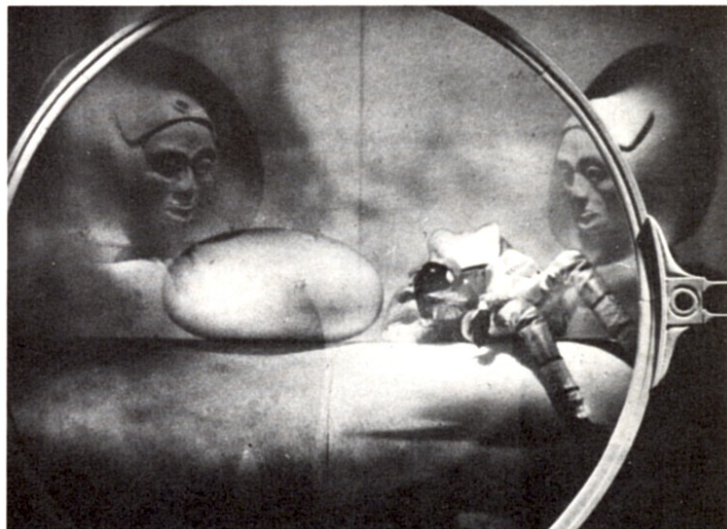
In addition to the dramatic score, Band also provided various amounts of practical source music such as that heard on portable radios during the course of the film. Due to the film's low-budget, Band re-used source music that he and Joel Goldsmith had composed for LASERBLAST, to which he owns the rights.

Just prior to composing THE HOUSE ON SORORITY ROW, Band was commissioned to write the score for TIME WALKER. Production delays kept him from seeing a final cut until about two weeks before he had to start on SORORITY ROW. "TIME WALKER was a fast and dirty one," Band said. "I ended up having to write the major portion of it backed up against the wall."

Band's approach to the film was fairly straight forward. The music was recorded with an orchestra of between twenty and thirty-one musicians. Unlike the symbolic thematic material of SORORITY ROW, Band chose to simply embellish the visuals with a mixture of orchestra, synthesizer and choir. "There's no real deep meaning in this one," Band chuckled.

The score is fairly atonal, opening with an Egyptian-style woodwind passage and an ominous, Herrmannesque two-note motif later developing a variety of string rustlings, bell-tree tinklings, low synthesizer warbles, and effective suspense motifs for piano, strings and percussion. The score really opens up at the climax, as the Mummy is revealed to be a marooned alien who zaps himself and the film's protagonist away to his home planet—shades of E.T. and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. For this climactic sequence, Band pulled out all the stops and provided a stirring, inspirational passage for sustained synthesizer and angelic choir.

"That's what I call my ode to John Williams," Band said spilling. □



A mountain climber meets the errant time sphere and is shown being observed on a monitor by the Chronossians (right).

CHRONOPOLIS

Polish animator Piotr Kamler's poetic stop-motion feature explores the nature of time.

By Frederic Albert Levy

Director Piotr Kamler spent five years cut off from the rest of the world, very often working alone in his atelier on a 14 hour-a-day schedule to bring CHRONOPOLIS to life. The 70-minute feature is animated, using an amazing variety of techniques.

"I was first trained as a painter," said Kamler. "My first films after studying fine arts were strongly influenced by the processes of painting—I first animated colored powders—but I have never done an animated cartoon. Sometimes the spheres you see in CHRONOPOLIS are dimensional, sometimes they are drawn, but they are never rendered as a drawing usually is. A single image may combine puppets, animated volumes, and drawings using up to ten in-camera passes. There was no optical work whatever. The only technique that I believe would characterize CHRONOPOLIS is stop-motion. My camera cannot take more than one frame at a time."

CHRONOPOLIS is the story of the Chronossians, who spend their time *making* time, kneading its very matter into spheres they dispatch all over the universe along interminable pipelines. An errant sphere chooses to travel not inside but *on* the pipeline, and bumps into a mountain climber, an event eagerly awaited by the Chronossians.

Kamler first spent six months building his atelier. Then he began experimenting and "making mistakes. I had lots of rushes, but not all of them were usable, and I had to cut a lot," he said. "Generally, there's hardly any surprise in the making of an animated cartoon, once the storyboard is set, but I *had* no storyboard, which meant I could easily go astray."

CHRONOPOLIS was made for slightly less than \$400,000, with

money provided by the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel of Paris and the state-controlled Centre National du Cinema. "It was a crazy enterprise," said Kamler. "It had to be a crazy one, but I found some nice madmen who would help and trust me." Kamler now confesses that the script he submitted to get funds had nothing to do with the film he made.

"But don't misunderstand me," he is quick to add. "There was no cynicism on my part. I felt I had to abandon my script while making the film. The script kept developing till the last minute. In the beginning I wanted to make a scientific film about Time. I soon discovered such an undertaking was beyond me."

It was when Kamler started building shapes and decors that his film began to take form. Shapes gradually became characters which in turn generated a story. Only after the film was completely shot was the script actually written. Kamler spent six months working on the opening narration which provides a key to all that follows.

Kamler admits—though with some reluctance—that there are gratuitous, if not meaningless images in the film. "Even though art is gratuitous, I tried to avoid the purely abstract," he said. "When I see CHRONOPOLIS now, I realize I failed to entirely achieve this ambition." On the other hand, there are a lot of elements in CHRONOPOLIS Kamler could have explained, but preferred to leave unclear. For instance, at one point, a bunch of discs escort the errant sphere. Explained Kamler, "In my original concept, discs were supposed to represent different kinds of instants: instants lived, instants to live, instants dead, etc., and a sphere was composed of several discs. Those which keep floating next to the Sphere are simply jealous of Her. I gave up such an explanatory ap-

proach. Such explanations, however plausible they may be, are ridiculous when *said*."

The film can be seen as a love-story between the Alpinist and the Sphere. He digs a hole into Her and takes out the device by which the Chronossians control Her from a distance. The device is also a kind of pre-recording of *His* destiny. Without it the lovers enjoy freedom, happiness and eternity. As for the Chronossians, it is left ambiguous whether they meet such a pleasant fate—they may have played with Time a little bit too much.

Viewers, however, are free to find their own interpretation. The opening narration, written by French poetess, Gabrielle Althen, is as much confusing as it is enlightening. Michael Lonsdale (Bond's enemy in MOONRAKER) is the ironical narrator.

CHRONOPOLIS is

Chronopolis (below) and a Chronossian (inset).



not an "easy" film, and its commercial prospects appear slim. The film was an official selection of the Cannes Film Festival, shown out of competition. Kamler is having trouble finding a distributor, but hopes the reality of his fantastic world is eloquent enough to attract an audience. Those who have seen the film know that he is not immodest in his hope.

Kamler is now preparing another animated feature, in the spirit of CHRONOPOLIS but accessible to larger audiences. Kamler would like to integrate real actors in his work, using dialogue to give greater emphasis to story and characterization. □

BOXOFFICE SURVEY: 1ST QUARTER GENRE OFF SECOND YEAR IN ROW

An analysis of the 50 Top Grossing Films, as reported weekly by *Variety*, reveals that in the first 13 weeks of 1983, revenue from horror, fantasy and science fiction films has decreased 4.6% over last year, while film grosses in general have increased 7.9%.

This is the second straight year that genre films decreased in revenues for the first quarter, while the general box office burgeoned. Last year, genre totals for the first quarter were off 22.2% from 1981's record-breaking total, while the overall box office increased 13.9%. In comparing this year's first quarter with 1981's, genre receipts have dropped a shocking 25.8% while the overall box office has jumped nearly 23%.

Top-grossing genre films in the *Variety* totals are listed at right. For purposes of breakdown by genre, titles are indicated as horror (h), fantasy (f) and science fiction (sf), followed by the number of weeks each title made it into the Top 50 listings since January 1. The totals do not include boxoffice figures from the previous year for films first released in 1982. The dollar amounts listed represent only a small, scientific sample of a film's total earnings (about one fourth of a film's actual worldwide rentals).

Of the 153 titles that comprised the weekly listings, 36 or 23.5% were genre titles. There were twelve science fiction films (compared to 8 last year at this time), accounting for 7.8% of the total, but only 6.7% of

receipts; twelve fantasy films (5 last year), 7.8% of total but a hefty 10.4% of receipts; and 12 horror films (27 last year), 7.8% of the total, but a dismal 3.5% of receipts.

While the total number of films in release only decreased 0.7% compared to last year, the number of genre films declined significantly—slightly over 10%—as distributors held back product for more lucrative summer playoff. Although the number of fantasy and science fiction films rose substantially—a whopping 140% and 50% respectively—horror films dropped a big 55.6%.

Columbia and Orion released no genre films in the year's first quarter, and Buena-Vista presented no new product, but re-released PETER

TOP GENRE FILMS OF '83

THE DARK CRYSTAL (f, 11).....	\$6,756,605
E.T. THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL (f, 13).....	\$3,930,568
THE ENTITY (sf, 7).....	\$3,680,697
KISS ME GOODBYE (f, 6).....	\$2,813,530
AIRPLANE II—THE SEQUEL (sf, 6).....	\$2,461,715
ONE DARK NIGHT (h, 9).....	\$2,421,504
PETER PAN (re-rel, f, 7).....	\$2,329,334
TIMERIDER (f, 4).....	\$1,865,760
TREASURE OF THE FOUR CROWNS (f, 9).....	\$1,853,597
HOUSE ON SORORITY ROW (h, 8).....	\$1,288,763
VIDEODROME (sf, 4).....	\$1,112,859

PAN, THE SWORD IN THE STONE and FANTASIA. Universal, with E.T., THE DARK CRYSTAL and VIDEODROME under its belt, walked away with the largest studio genre gross. □

DREAMSCAPE

Fantastic dream sequences involve makeup and stop motion effects.

By Michael Mayo

DREAMSCAPE is about the penetration of man's last psychological frontier: the landscape of his dreams. Max Von Sydow has invented a machine that will allow psychics to enter into another person's dreams and affect them physically from within that dream. Von Sydow is a psychologist that wants to help people with the device, but Christopher Plummer, as the head of a CIA-ish government group, sees it as the perfect way to commit murder and plans to use it for his own ends. Plummer doesn't think small either; his first victim will be Eddie Albert, the President of the United States.

DREAMSCAPE is from an original story written by David Loughery, a young screenwriter, and is directed by Joe Rubin. Among Rubin's feature film credits are JOYRIDE and THE POM POM GIRLS, one of the most successful independent films ever made. The associate producer is Chuck Russell, and the final shoot-

ing script is a collaboration of Loughery, Rubin and Russell.

Also starring in the \$6 million production is Dennis Quaid as a young drifter enlisted on the project by Von Sydow. Quaid will be seen shortly as astronaut Gordon Cooper in THE RIGHT STUFF, and Von Sydow left directly from filming DREAMSCAPE for the March 30 production start of the long-delayed DUNE. David Patrick Kelley, (the jittery psychopath from THE WARRIORS) also stars as Plummer's assassin in training. Kate Capshaw, who has just been selected as the female lead in the upcoming INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DEATH, plays a researcher who falls in love with Quaid.

The \$6 million budget may seem almost ridiculous for a quality genre movie today, but associate producer Chuck Russell has managed the almost impossible task of assembling a top-flight crew that promises the look of a film twice the budget of DREAMSCAPE. Cinematography

will be by Dennis Tufano, the English cinematographer whose work on QUADROPHENIA and THE LORDS OF DISCIPLINE has established him as a versatile professional capable of handling difficult lighting assignments. Tufano will be directly responsible for creating the moody feel that Rubin wants for the film's live action scenes. Complementing the photography will be the music of two-time Academy Award winner, Maurice Jarre, an enormously gifted composer whose styles have ranged from the epic LAWRENCE OF ARABIA and DR. ZHIVAGO to the unusual THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY.

The highlights of the film will be five increasingly complex dreams that Quaid has to enter. One features a post-thermonuclear landscape that Eddie Albert fears is a vision of the future unless he makes an arms agreement with the Russians. Albert and Quaid find themselves hunted through the landscape by mutant creatures and a hideous man-snake.



Kate Capshaw

Makeup effects artist Craig Reardon will create both the snakeman and its transformation scenes, which director Rubin said will not be like current horror films.

"We didn't want this film to look like AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON," said Rubin, "we wanted a different look. So what we've done is have Craig make about 40 different heads, starting with David Patrick Kelley's face and changing him into the Snakeman within two-and-a-half seconds."

DREAMSCAPE will utilize extensive mattework, opticals and some stop-motion animation. Contributing these bits of work will be Peter Kuran of Visual Concepts Engineering and Richard Taylor of MAGI. Taylor will reportedly do the dream transition sequences while Kuran will handle the surreal dream landscapes.

The film is produced independently by Bruce Cohn Curtis and filmed on an eight week schedule beginning February 3 in and around various Los Angeles locations. No distribution deal has been set, but the production hopes for a release sometime this fall. □

Left: Spy Christopher Plummer and president Eddie Albert. Right: Plummer and inventor Max von Sydow.



DEAD ZONE

David Cronenberg shuns the auteur route to adapt Stephen King's ESP novel to the screen.

By Tim Lucas

A deluded man, staggering under the influence of a vision-inducing brain tumor, suddenly appears at a rally to assassinate a potentially dangerous political figure. It sounds like a sequel to David Cronenberg's *VIDEODROME*. But it is the climax of Stephen King's best-selling novel *The Dead Zone*, which just happens to be the source material for Cronenberg's latest venture. Will audiences see more tumors, exploding heads and bodies? Perhaps not, this time.

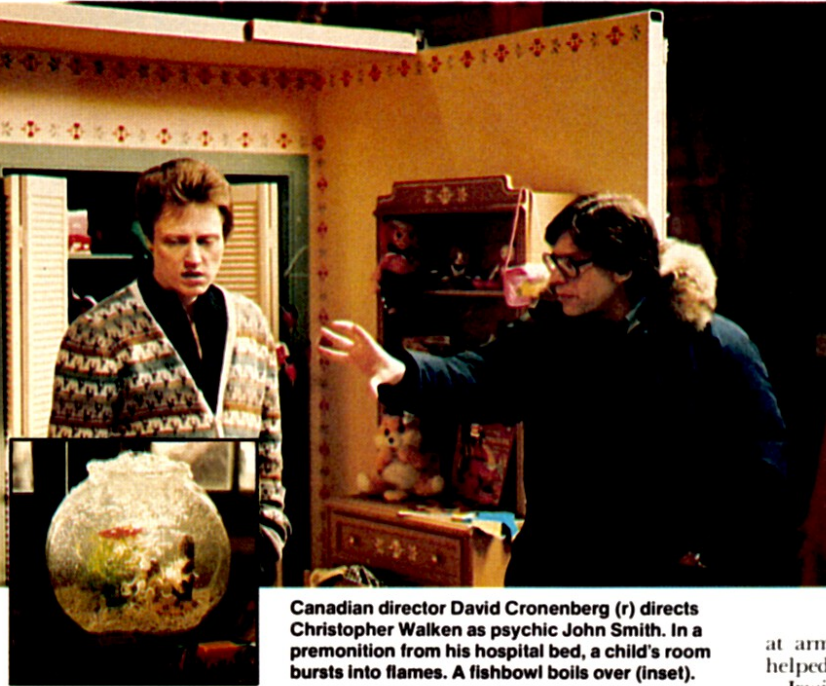
DEAD ZONE (the film drops *The*), which completed shooting in late March, is produced by Debra Hill for Dino De Laurentiis. The film stars Christopher Walken as John Smith, Brooke Adams (*INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS* re-make), Colleen Dewhurst, Herbert Lom, Tom Skerritt (*ALIEN*) and Martin Sheen. The film will be released in October by Paramount.

Cronenberg was originally approached for *DEAD ZONE* prior to the filming of *SCANNERS*, when Carol Baum of Lorimar Productions asked him—on the strength of *THE BROOD*—if he would be interested in directing it. "I read the book as soon as I got back to Toronto," Cronenberg reminisced. "But before I had a chance to react, she called me and apologized because, just about the time she had talked to me, Lorimar signed Stanley Donen to direct it, with Sydney Pollack producing.

That film was obviously never made, and a veritable army of additional names surrounded the property—Paul Monash, Stephen King, even Russian director Andre Kochalansky—before Lorimar entered dire straits and was forced to liquidate its branch of feature film production.

However, in 1982, Cronenberg got a second crack at the project. Producer Debra Hill (*HALLOWEEN*), asked Cronenberg if he was still interested. "It seemed very fateful that the offer would come full circle," Cronenberg said. "*DEAD ZONE* really appealed to me, and there were connections I had with King's work and *DEAD ZONE* in particular that seemed unwilling to be denied."

Readers of the King novel will detect quite a number of changes in the filmed saga of John Smith, a man comatose for five years who awakens with a gift (or is it a curse?) of contact-induced psychic visions: a touch from a nurse tells Smith that her house is on fire and her daughter is trapped; the handshake of politician



Canadian director David Cronenberg (r) directs Christopher Walken as psychic John Smith. In a premonition from his hospital bed, a child's room bursts into flames. A fishbowl boils over (inset).

Greg Stillson (Martin Sheen) tells Smith that, unless stopped, Stillson will become president and push the button on the Soviet Union.

The main alteration from print to celluloid lies in the film's definition of the "dead zone." The book depicts it as a blank spot in Johnny's visions, a recurring gap in the wholeness of his psychic imagery that is due to a brain tumor, introduced almost apologetically in the final chapter. In the film, there is no tumor and the "dead zone" is more metaphorical—each one of his psychic visions drains years off his life.

"I don't think the concept was very clear in the book," said Cronenberg. "I didn't see how that was necessarily any different from anyone else who suffers brain damage in an accident. I wanted to make it more specific, significant and cinematic."

Also, the novel's tremendous structural coup of contrasting the characters of Johnny and Stillson from the beginning—the contrasting of a True Seer (Johnny) unwilling to exploit his gift with a False Seer (Stillson) leading his followers happily down the road to total obliteration—was ditched once the script locked itself into a more linear path.

"Since Johnny and Stillson are no longer paralleled, there can be no contrast," Cronenberg explained. "It's obvious that the characters can't have the same dynamics between them. I must say, we tried, but we couldn't find a way of duplicating what the book did in terms of paralleling. We had to 'reinvent' the book; condense it without worrying about being faithful to it in any literary, bookish way. Still, I think we have been faithful to

the book in terms of sustaining its tone."

The "we" invoked by Cronenberg includes Debra Hill and screenwriter Jeffrey Boam (*STRAIGHT TIME*), who was involved since the Donen days. It was Boam's work, from among all the scripts available on the property, for which Cronenberg felt the greatest creative sympathy. Early in preproduction, Boam, Hill and Cronenberg spent three days in a Toronto hotel picking over the various drafts and struggling to get a feel for the characters.

Although Cronenberg liked parts of Boam's script, he didn't go for its conclusion. "It was a direct rip-off of the ending of *DRESSED TO KILL*," Cronenberg commented. "There was this weird sequence of endings where, after Johnny successfully shoots Stillson at a rally, the Castle Rock Killer (a minor character whom Johnny is recruited to "sniff out" psychically) escapes from jail and tries to kill Sarah (Johnny's girlfriend), who gets her throat slashed in a fake dream murder. It really felt tacked-on from another movie.

Interestingly, Stephen King's own script for *DEAD ZONE* used the Castle Rock Killer as its primary focus. Cronenberg found this emphasis, as well as King's opening scene, quite brutal. "It began with Stillson torturing a kid in a back room," Cronenberg said. "I didn't want to open the film with that."

King himself declined to talk about *DEAD ZONE*, insisting that he was not involved. However, Debra Hill said she screened several scenes for him which apparently won his enthusiastic approval.

DEAD ZONE is the first film Cronenberg has directed without writing since his little-seen drag-strip opus, *FAST COMPANY* (1979). This means *DEAD ZONE* may be quite different from what we've come to expect from Cronenberg.

"I didn't try to inject the themes from my other films into *DEAD ZONE*," Cronenberg said. "Once I've decided that I like the basic material, there's no reason for me to try and change it to be more like me."

Mark Irwin, the director's regular cinematographer, agrees that *DEAD ZONE* will differ from earlier Cronenberg films. "David was more relaxed about the material, not having written the film, so the decisions he made were at arm's length and that probably helped his judgment," Irwin said.

Irwin and art director Carol Spier have envisioned *DEAD ZONE*'s New England milieu as a world painted by Norman Rockwell, using locations in Niagara-on-the-Lake, 40 miles from downtown Toronto. Complementing the look of mythic New England are Johnny's surrealistic visions, which combine the talents of special effects designer John G. Belyeu (*POLTERGEIST*) and stunt coordinator Dick Warlock (*THE THING*).

Cronenberg insists *DEAD ZONE* will be something of a tearjerker. But it's still hard to imagine a "psychic ORDINARY PEOPLE" from the king of exploding heads.

"I like to think of *DEAD ZONE* as 'Tears from the Prince of Blood,'" he laughed. □

Martin Sheen as presidential candidate Greg Stillson whom psychic John Smith envisions starting a nuclear WWII.



SPACE HUNTER

ADVENTURES IN THE
FORBIDDEN ZONE

**Space Opera—
fast, fun and
imaginative,
puts 3-D on the
big-budget map.**

by David J. Hogan

November, 1982: The sky over the red canyonlands outside Moab, Utah was looking nasty. As director Lamont Johnson tried to line up an exterior shot for *SPACE-HUNTER: ADVENTURES IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE*—a \$12 million 3-D science fiction adventure scheduled for May 20 release by Columbia—the grey clouds turned black and let loose a barrage of hailstones that struck with the force of pistol shots. Actors, grips, and other crew members hastily covered equipment and dashed for shelter.

In a few minutes, Johnson was in his trailer, continuing last-minute script changes with writers Dan Goldberg and Len Bloom; *SPACE-*

Left: Wolff, played by Peter Strauss, and his electronic gun, a prop which fires spark cannisters designed by Canadian effects assistant George Erschbamer. Above: Michael Ironside as Wolff's nemesis Overdog McNab in makeup created by Tom Burman.



HUNTER was being written virtually as it was filmed. In another trailer, star Peter Strauss rubbed his frigid hands and eyed the miserable weather. He cast his eyes heavenward and muttered, "Gimme a break!" Strauss' half-serious plea became a litany that summed up the film's troubled early days of production. Lamont Johnson calls SPACEHUNTER a "Grand Guignol" romance in space," but Grand Guignol in MovieLand might not be inappropriate.

Originally titled ADVENTURES IN THE CREEP ZONE and budgeted at about \$4 million, the project ran into trouble when Canadian director Jean Lafleur was fired after less than two weeks of shooting. What little footage he had come up with was scrapped entirely. At least one member of the cast was let go, and Lamont Johnson later insisted that costume, makeup, and other design elements be reworked completely. One month and hundreds of thousand of dollars after its October 18 start date, SPACEHUNTER was trying to forget that it was nearly dead.

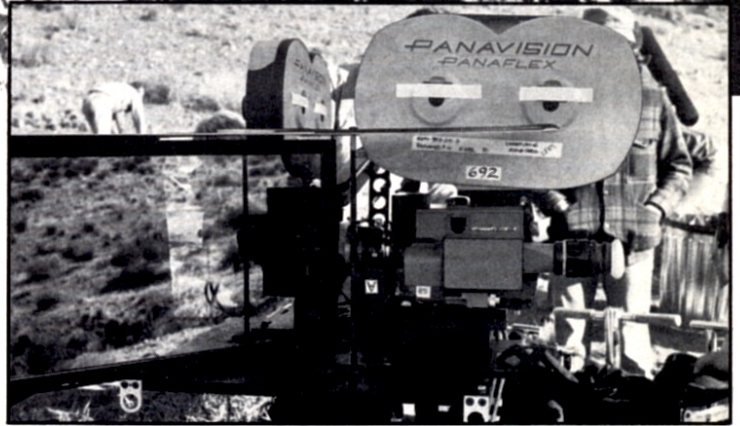
From all reports, the film turned the corner a couple weeks after Johnson took over. According to the director, crew morale was "up 500%" by mid-November. Shooting amid the red earth and potash of eastern Utah wrapped before the end of the year—sooner than had been expected—and the company moved to Vancouver for a scheduled four weeks of interiors. These were completed by the last week of January.

SPACEHUNTER is space opera sf with some new twists. Peter Strauss plays Wolff, a canny mercenary who has forsaken the military for self-employment as a salvage expert who deals in junked spaceships. A distress call from an outpost planet called Terra Eleven promises a hefty reward for the rescue of three comely space tourists who have been marooned there. The planet, developed and exploited by greedy Earth corporations, is now stripped and barren. But not deserted. Descendants of the original settlers have fallen into barbarous feudalism. Wolff must contend with Barracuda Women, grotesquely corpulent Bat People, plague-ridden nomads called Scavs, and Overdog McNab (Michael Ironside), the disfigured despot who rules the planet. But Wolff's greatest test is provided by 14 year-old Niki (Molly Ringwald), a rambunctious little savage who isn't quite as tough as she'd like Wolff to



Director Lamont Johnson on location in Moab, Utah, as his crew prepares to shoot the arrival of the vulture gliders, in background. Cables hooked to the prop are attached to a crane (far left).

Right: The two camera 3-D system developed by consultant Ernie McNab used to film SPACEHUNTER. A half-silvered mirror transmits the photographed image to one camera lens while reflecting it at an angle into the other. The angle of reflection creates a virtual separation of the two camera lenses equal to that of human eyes.



believe. Lamont Johnson has aimed to shape their relationship into the heart of the film. Other cast members include Andrea Marcovici, Ernie Hudson, Paul Boretski and Patrick Rowe.

The film's original story was titled ROAD GANGS, and was written by Jean Lafleur and Stewart Harding. They pitched it to Andre Link and John Dunning (HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME), who agreed to finance its development early in 1981. Harding, who is also associate producer, described ROAD GANGS as "a combination of MAD MAX and THE WARRIORS, a traditionally-structured quest adventure." All of the action took place on a post-apocalyptic Earth. A script was worked up by David Preston and Edie Rey, whose previous film work had consisted mainly of ghosting and rewriting. They created the youngster Niki and her contentious relationship with Wolff.

The first draft was completed by the spring of 1982 and was sent to

Ivan Reitman (STRIPES), who came on as executive producer. ROAD WARRIOR was in production by that time, and Reitman felt that the action of ROAD GANGS should be shifted to another planet in order to avoid similarities. By July of '82 the project was entitled ADVENTURES IN THE CREEP ZONE. Reitman budgeted the picture at less than \$2 million, gave the directorial nod to Lafleur, and made a distribution deal with Columbia. Don Carmody—fresh from PORKY'S II—was brought in as line producer.

Lafleur's previous directorial credits are THE TIGRESS and THE MYSTERY OF THE MILLION DOLLAR HOCKEY PUCK. He allowed production designer Jack Degovia, costumer Julie Weiss, and makeup artist Tom Burman to work freely, and they did—to a fault. "Lafleur was a very vague person who couldn't quite put his finger on what he wanted," commented Burman. "I saw little potential in the script, but because

Lafleur had no preconceived notions, we had free reign."

The project quickly got out of hand. "The designers had too much freedom, and things ran wild," Burman said. "Everything got too busy, too colorful." Molly Ringwald's initial makeup, for instance, painted her face like a mandrill's. Early costume designs for the Scavs were so thick with mud and weeds that the actors could barely move. One man could not even get through the door of the makeup trailer. Other costumes had incongruous splashes of iridescent color. Jack Degovia's eclectic automobiles and cycles bristled with studs and spikes. The film's look became that of ROAD WARRIOR carried to the nth degree.

Additional problems were presented by the script. The girl, Niki, was an unsympathetic foul-mouth who uttered charming epithets like, "Hey, dork-face!" Her relationship with Wolff promised tension but little warmth.

Lafleur began shooting in Utah

"I can't conceive of any picture having more crossfire."

Director LAMONT JOHNSON

on October 18. Less than two weeks later, on a weekend the crew dubbed "The Halloween Massacre," he was released. "The first two weeks of shooting were really bad," remembered makeup artist Steve LaPorte. "The action looked hokey, and the colors were way too psychedelic. The lighting was off. Things just didn't come together."

Stewart Harding commented, "It got to the point where Jean [Lefleur] didn't agree with everyone else on where the project should be going or what it should look like. Unfortunately, a lot of money was at stake. It had gotten to be a much larger film than we had started, and was getting larger by the day. The producers as a group confronted the fact that we weren't getting the film we wanted."

"Lafleur was working directly from storyboards and was shooting shot by shot without masters," elaborated Jack Degovia. "We could tell from the dailies that it just wasn't going to come together. Jean was making a very bizarre picture—like Cocteau's *ORPHEUS* or *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*. There was humor, but the thrust was more savage and cruel than what we have now. Lefleur's idea of the bizarre is much different from that of Hollywood folks. He was

making a commercial picture that didn't have a commercial focus."

Producer Ivan Reitman decided to scrap everything Lafleur had shot, and to euphemistically refer to it as "test footage." Dan and Ilona Goldberg and Len Bloom—scripters who had contributed to Reitman's 1981 hit *STRIPES*—were brought in to revamp the screenplay. Lamont Johnson was contacted as he was finishing an adaptation of *JACK AND THE BEANSTALK* for cable television.

"They wanted me right away, but I just couldn't drop everything," said Johnson, whose credits include *THE EXECUTION OF PRIVATE SLOVIK*, *THE GROUNDSTAR CONSPIRACY* and *LIPSTICK*. "I asked for the script and hated it. But I did see a germ of something in the relationship between Wolff and the wail. I came in as soon as I could and looked at the sets and costume designs. I told the producers there was no way I could start shooting when they wanted. The look of the film was overdone and fussy. The dialogue was a mixture of beatnik and punk. We toned it down, and focused more on fractured syntax. The new writers helped to give the picture a little heart."

In effect, Johnson started from

scratch. His experience as a budget-minded television director (including a number of *TWILIGHT ZONE* episodes) made him an ideal choice to salvage *SPACEHUNTER*. At 62, he is one of that breed of anonymous craftsmen who know how to come onto a project, take charge, and get the thing done. "Lamont's first day was tense, but I could see the crew loosen up by about the third day," recalled Peter Strauss. "Lamont is very energetic, a good presence on the set. I've been able to see the energy level and quality of the footage rise."

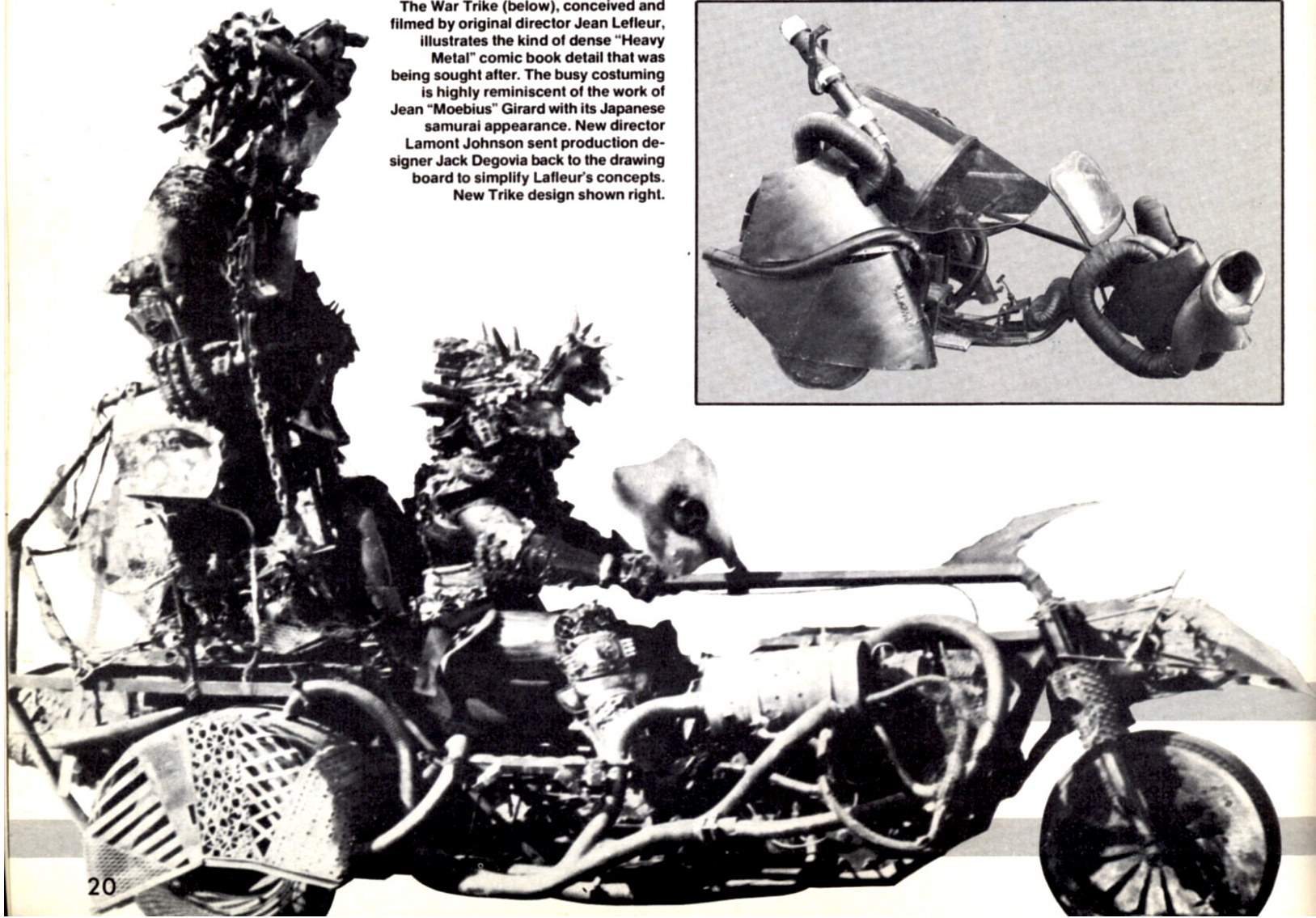
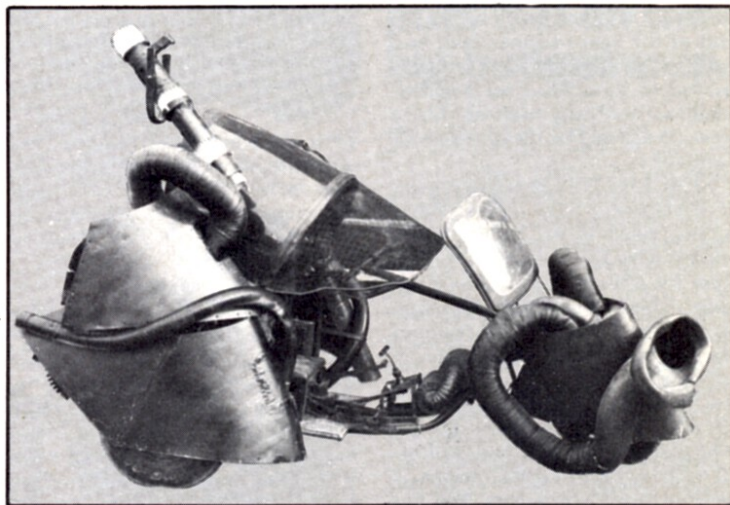
Johnson jumped in with both feet and began his shoot with a number of difficult dialogue scenes, feeling that the focal characters and their interrelationships needed immediate adjustment. "We've taken an approach that's entirely different from that of the original script," he said. "Peter Strauss is a great collaborator. He's helped me reshape Wolff and make the character wry and diffident. He's a 21st Century dropout who's said to hell with the service and to hell with responsibility. He's a sort of beachcomber. *SPACEHUNTER*'s going to be tongue-in-cheek but it'll also be a romance that will have some formidable characters and situations. It'll call for an old-fashioned

suspension of disbelief."

Johnson exudes energy and confidence, but the business of rewriting as you shoot can drain even the most capable director and cast. Peter Strauss, a highly-disciplined and classically-trained actor who is best known for his starring roles in *THE JERICHO MILE*, *MASADA*, and *RICH MAN, POOR MAN*, said "We've been doing rewrites every day, even writing on the location. It's been necessary, but it's a very dangerous way to make movies. We were shooting with Lamont for two weeks before I began to understand what I'd have to do in order to bring my character to life."

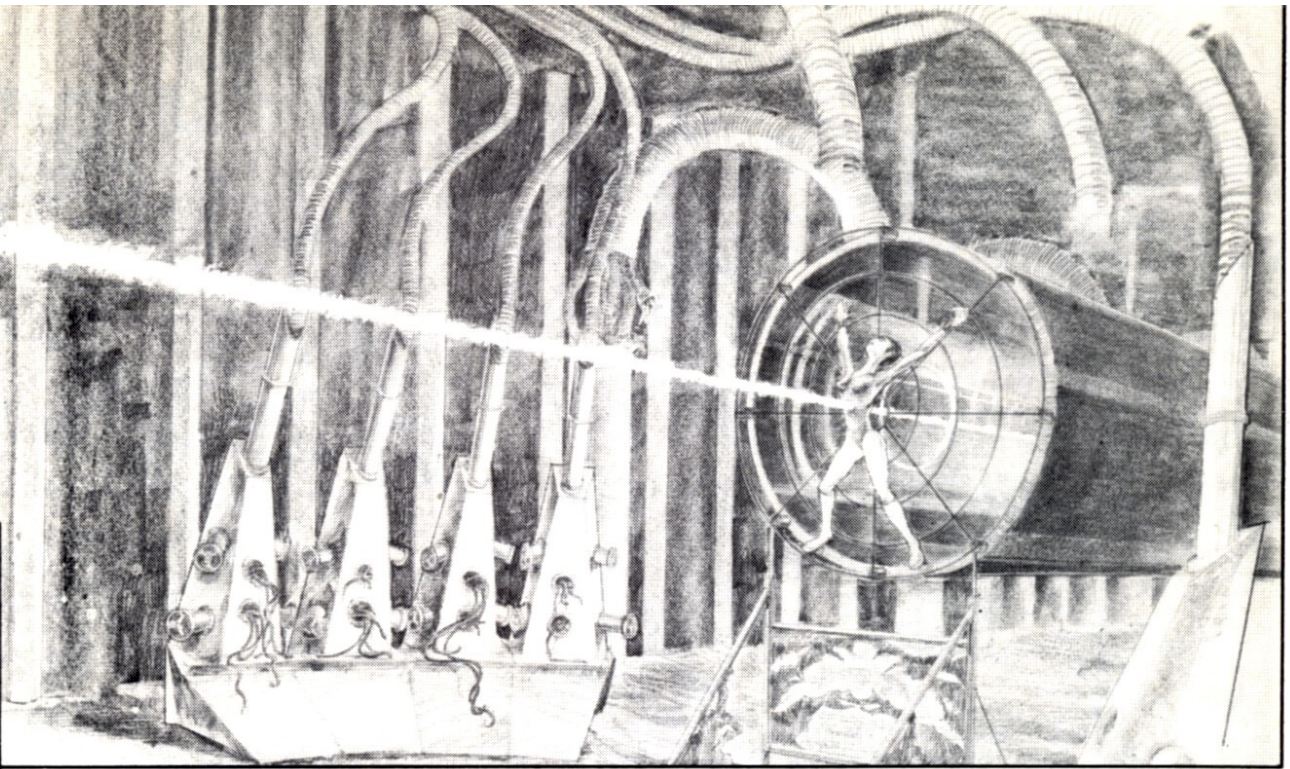
A fresh, believable approach to the film's production design was the responsibility of Jack Degovia, who was brought onto the project by Don Carmody in the spring of 1982, after a two-year stint on *THE WINDS OF WAR*. Degovia's early experience includes low-budget, non-union pictures like *ILSA, SHE-WOLF OF THE S.S.* He appreciates the unusual, and was attracted by the scope of *ROAD GANGS*. "I was looking for an opportunity to pick my own people and run my own shop," Degovia said. His initial budget—which included props, sets and costumes—was about \$1 million.

The War Trike (below), conceived and filmed by original director Jean Lefleur, illustrates the kind of dense "Heavy Metal" comic book detail that was being sought after. The busy costuming is highly reminiscent of the work of Jean "Moebius" Girard with its Japanese samurai appearance. New director Lamont Johnson sent production designer Jack Degovia back to the drawing board to simplify Lefleur's concepts. New Trike design shown right.





Jack Degovia



Sketch artist Tim Cowan's rendering of production designer Jack Degovia's concept of the inner sanctum of Overdog McNab. Tied-up and tortured on the wrack of McNab's pulsating energy corridor is Niki (Molly Ringwald). Degovia's designs have the pulpish feel of science fiction magazine covers of the '40s. Degovia built the energy corridor out of concentric neon rings, which provide a stunning pulsating effect in 3-D.

When *ROAD GAMES* became *CREEP ZONE*, Degovia had no difficulty translating his earth-bound concepts into science-fictional ones. An English major in college, he has been a lifelong reader of sf. "I love space opera," he said. "The gusto of pulp magazines like *Imagination* and *As-tounding* always appealed to me." Because Degovia's early orientation was literary, he feels that "It's important to start with words and work from there when designing a picture. I delve into a story and generate artifacts by working backwards. For *SPACEHUNTER*, I looked at the cargo cults that developed in the Pacific after World War II—natives who built straw airplanes in hopes of attracting the great god who brought C-rations. *SPACEHUNTER* deals with a similar sort of society, one that has slipped back from technology. They've created their building and machines from the remains of that culture. The people have designed things for very specific purposes, but because their materials are limited no two things are precisely alike."

Many of Degovia's designs suggest the quirky personality of folk art. "I told my design people to use their imaginations and take risks," he said. "I tried to give all of them equal freedom. There is a lot of

story in *SPACEHUNTER*, and a lot of story in the design." Indeed. Not only did Degovia become an important contributor to the script, but he underwent the trials of being forced to adapt to a new directorial voice. "Lamont [Johnson] was a ruthless editor," Degovia said. "He felt that everything the designers had done was great, but that we had to make a movie out of it. Lamont Johnson is much more interested in human characters and story than Lefleur was. Lamont will certainly create a much more accessible film, with identifiable characters and fluid action. A lot of things were changed very quickly after he came on. Over time, my collaboration with Lamont became closer, but was never ideal. All of the changes happened so quickly—everything took place in a week."

Early costume designs bristled with spikes and other barbaric detail. Stuntmen were reluctant to ride the spiky, razor-sharp motorcycles. "After Lamont [Johnson] took over, we cut the costumes down, made them black and simple," Degovia said. "We rebuilt the five bikes in six days. An art director has to be adaptable. My personal hero is Odysseus—the man who is never at a loss. You just have to accept change and go out and do it."

Degovia's vehicular concepts,

though toned down, remain fiercely impressive. The chassis of cars and light trucks provided the basis for most of them. Wolff's "Scrambler" is a rugged, all-terrain rover that supposedly converts table scraps into energy. The villainous Trik-ers drive black, low-slung, three-wheeled cars that Degovia powered with throaty Corvette engines. Motorcycles were customized with wraparound roll bars that give the impression of free-wheeling gyroscopes.

Degovia's most impressive vehicle is the Techno Train, an ingenious combination of locomotive, windjammer, military command center, and farm. Tattered sails can be hoisted for wind power, while twin rows of workers standing at hand pumps provide additional thrust. The train is armed with a laser cannon, but also carries a complement of goats and chickens. In reality, the train is powered with a small diesel engine hidden at the rear. The original script called for the train to belong to a villainous slaver, but Lamont Johnson realized that such an impressive vehicle ought to belong to the good guys. Many of the train's elements—like girders and cranes—are cleverly-disguised wood, but enough metal remained on it and other vehicles to cause a few problems.

"Jack's train is terrific but I cut

myself every time I grab onto it," Peter Strauss ruefully said. "I've had stunt doubles come up to me and ask if there's any way we can justify my character wearing gloves. And whenever I get into the Scrambler I lose a ball, skin my knee, and knock my head."

Degovia understood the difficulties, but said, "I had to see that the sculpture on view was energetic. I hope audiences won't be able to absorb all the designs at once. We've tried to make them rich and layered. My initial goal was to make a picture so detailed that people would want to see it five times. I like my sets to present the director with a challenge. I don't want my work to be like a hospital set on a TV stage where anybody can come in, light it in half an hour, shoot and then leave. The sets should have more mystery. But 3-D negates much of the detail. You've got to accommodate the physical movement of the camera itself. The 3-D camera is a much bulkier instrument than in a flat film. You also need a lot more light." To compensate, many of Degovia's designs are open and full of reflective surfaces that will interact well with the 3-D.

Degovia's interior sets were constructed and filmed in an abandoned bridge factory in Vancouver, British Columbia, as large and imposing as any Hollywood sound

"I told my people to use their imaginations and take risks."

Production designer JACK DEGOWIA

stage. Inside the massive structure where pieces of San Francisco's Golden Gate bridge were once prefabricated, Degovia has designed and constructed the Swamp of the Barracuda Women and the Maze of Overdog McNab, an amalgam of twisted metal, old machinery and spare parts that actually incorporate the iron-girdered and lattice-work superstructure of the building itself. Trolley car tracks run somewhat incongruously along the floors and through the sets, and off in the inky distance, perceived

only as ominous shapes beyond the illumination of set lights sit row upon row of unused and aging bus and trolley cars now stored in the building by BC Hydro, British Columbia's transit authority.

The Vancouver location was a last-minute and lucky discovery. "We were in terrible trouble. We had to start shooting but had no place to shoot," Degovia said. "Then I saw the Bridge and said to the producers and director, 'Hey, this is it!'" With a half dozen 40 foot truckloads of airplane surplus

parts from Arizona, Degovia and his design crew set about building a city in the flies and trusses of the warehouse in September of 1982.

"Local craftsman and welders were turning out marvelous pieces of folk art," Degovia said. "I told them to pretend that they were bored living in a walled city, and just let them go. I could never have gotten as much pictorial value out of a studio operation. Half my sets are the structure that already exists here."

Degovia's metal Maze occupies nearly the back third of the Bridge, with snaking corridors of twisted metal airplane parts scavenged from an Arizona dumping ground. Propeller and jet intake casings are mounted on a metal framework wall. The jagged edges of an exploded fuselage appear to block the corridor, making it all but impassable for our heroes when hotly pursued. A careful touch reveals the deadly edges to be meticulously crafted foam rubber props, harmless for filming the movie's frenetic chase action.

Most impressive is Degovia's corridor of pulsating energy, leading to the fortress of Overdog McNab. About 60 feet in length and ten feet in diameter, the shiny metallic interior of the perfectly round corridor mirrors the glow of rings of bright orange neon which hang at regular intervals. The view down the length of the shaft is breathtaking in 3-D as the concentric rings are made to pulsate in sequence, enhancing the feeling of depth.

Beyond the pulsating corridor lies the inner sanctum of Overdog McNab. The ceiling of the building for this set has been ringed with one foot diameter metal conduit, spray painted silver.

Lamont Johnson comes on the set to direct Michael Ironside, who is being fitted into the metal shell of Overdog McNab. With all the changes and extra shooting, the crew jokingly now refers to the character as "Overbudget McNab." Johnson limps slightly on his right leg, wears a beret at a jaunty angle, and with a neat, gray trimmed mustache, looks like a British colonel. Overdog's life-support system as designed by Degovia and Ellis Burman has a black, greasy, mechanical look that is a wonderful contrast to its high-tech

blinking lights.

Inevitably, people are going to be reminded of ROAD WARRIOR, another film which showcased a makeshift, quasi-technological society. Degovia dismisses comparisons: "I don't think SPACEHUNTER is going to be markedly like ROAD WARRIOR, or any other film. I admit to being very eclectic. I like to mix styles. But if I was going to borrow, I'd borrow from the old masters. Taking from contemporary artists is really quite defeating. I don't want to be caught up in the daisy chain of imitate, imitate, imitate that seems to follow modern illustrators."

Prop master Robert Joyce and his crew of about ten artists made a special point to avoid aping other films. In fact, ROAD WARRIOR was screened in Hollywood for the prop people so that they could steer clear of its visual approach. In order to find components for props, Joyce and Degovia haunted hardware stores and junkyards. Scraps of Army ordinance and aircraft junk purchased from Lockheed were used to create a provocative mixture of machinery and organics.

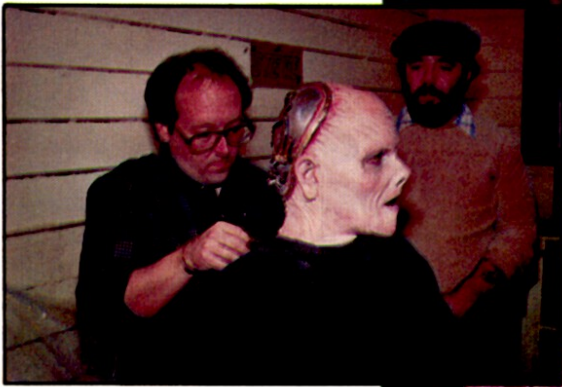
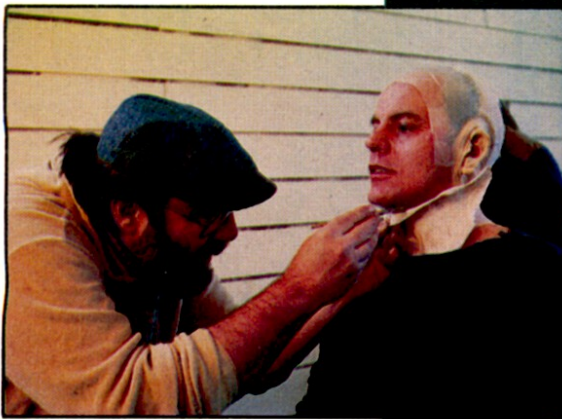
The essence of a cannibalized culture will be especially apparent in the film's weaponry. Artist Perry McLamb made clever use of hair curlers, flash bulbs, toy parts, and other flotsam when designing a myriad of handguns. The random elements are partially obscured beneath flat black paint, but the bizarre quality remains. Although Joyce and his crew had little money and even less time, their work is fresh and imaginative.

Like Jack Degovia, costume designer Julie Weiss (THE GANGSTER CHRONICLES, LITTLE GLORIA, HAPPY ATLAST, The Elephant Man on Broadway.) worked backwards after examining settings and characters. Weiss, a soft-spoken Tony nominee who has taught at Stanford, explained, "I've tried to suggest for each character a sense of history, that they have come from somewhere and are going somewhere. I've also incorporated practicality of dress." Weiss' designs are fanciful but make sense in the context of the story and the environment in which it is played out. Black, brown, and olive drab predominate.

"I wouldn't have been interested in the film if I'd had to do the typically slick approach to sf costuming," added Weiss. "That sort of approach may look pretty, but it's really very empty, especially



A mutant child (left) prepares to lob a molotov cocktail at spacehunter Wolff and his party. Two of the dwarves who play the mutants hold their masks by The Burman's Studio on location in Moab, Utah (above).



Michael Ironside as Overdog McNab gets fitted, with the help of special effects prop builder Robert Joyce, into his mechanical life-support system, including powerful claw-like pincers designed by Jack Degovia and Ellis Burman. Ironside, the star of *SCANNERS* and *VISITING HOURS* brings powerful screen presence to the role of Overdog, in makeup designed by Tom Burman. Burman (inset above, top) and Dale Martin (above, left) applied an elaborate skull cap and appliance makeup to Ironside for the Vancouver shooting, complete with metallic skull piece and facial rivets.



when every character is dressed similarly. In *SPACEHUNTER*, the three marooned girls wear very sleek outfits, but there is a counterpoint because no one else in the film dresses that way. I tried to express the girls' carefree attitudes. There's not much going on in their gray matter—I think their colorful and provocative costumes suggest that."

"Colorful" also describes the specialty makeups that have been created by Tom Burman, veteran of *CAT PEOPLE*, *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS* and *THE BEAST WITHIN*. Burman is eager to move away from bluntly gruesome horror films, and accepted *SPACEHUNTER* because it promised a certain amount of freedom.

"I wasn't tickled with the original script, but at least it wasn't another gore film," Burman said. "After the false start in October, Jack Degovia, Julie Weiss, and I came to a nice agreement whereby we worked together to get a unified look."

Burman created a variety of peculiar images, chief among them the face of Overdog McNab, the villain whose decrepit body is kept alive with machinery and drugs. To suggest a cyborg quality, Burman fitted Michael Ironside with a chrome skullpiece and dotted the actor's face with rivets. Stretched skin will give the effect of a face lift that didn't quite work. Burman also fashioned chrome teeth appliances that will give McNab a particularly

fearsome look.

Contributing makeup artist Steve LaPorte described the design as a "combination old age and casualty makeup." McNab is confined to a mechanical "pod" which was designed and built by Ellis Burman (Tom's Brother) and Bob Williams. Although the ruler is virtually motionless within the pod, he makes evil use of a pair of hydraulic arms with rusty claws.

Michael Ironside was cast by Jean Lafleur, but did not work with him. "I was on hold in Rumorville during the problems," Ironside commented. Once on track, the actor enjoyed Overdog hugely, saying, "He's a more interesting character than the lead. I see Overdog as the off-lead. Wolff is the

wall that everybody bounces balls off of—I'd rather be the one who bounces the balls."

Ironside added, "The frustrations of being immobile are very real. It's been a gift for me, as an actor. I don't have to look very far to find anger or jealousy at the immobility of other people. I have no choice in my movements—that's all up to Lamont. So I work from that frustration to create the character. The machine is so restrictive that after I come out of the makeup I'm always very high, then low. But I love it."

When *SPACEHUNTER* was still called *ADVENTURES IN THE CREEP ZONE*, the McNab character was called King Creep. The King had not been intended to

“The frustrations of being immobile are very real.”

Actor **MICHAEL IRONSIDE**



wear a hefty amount of makeup, but Lamont Johnson altered the character after being impressed by Tom Burman's unusual designs for McNab's minions, the Zoners. Burman created a variety of rough-hewn metal masks that cover noses or one side of a face. In keeping with the tone of space-age savagery, many of the Zoners have stuck discarded resistors and coils through their cheeks and noses. In essence, their ritualistic makeups cleverly reflect the ruined and debased technology that surrounds them.

The planet's plague victims are called Scavs. Tired, tattered, demented, they roam the countryside like animals. Johnson liked the early designs, so Burman turned loose a horde of young artists at his Van Nuys studio and created enough appliances for dozens of the characters. Steve LaPorte handled the Scav makeups during the Utah shoot. The appliances—which suggest open sores, ravaged noses, and the like—were made of foam latex. LaPorte gave them a particularly virulent look by adding a coat of slimy gelatin. In order to ensure that the camera would properly pick up every grue-

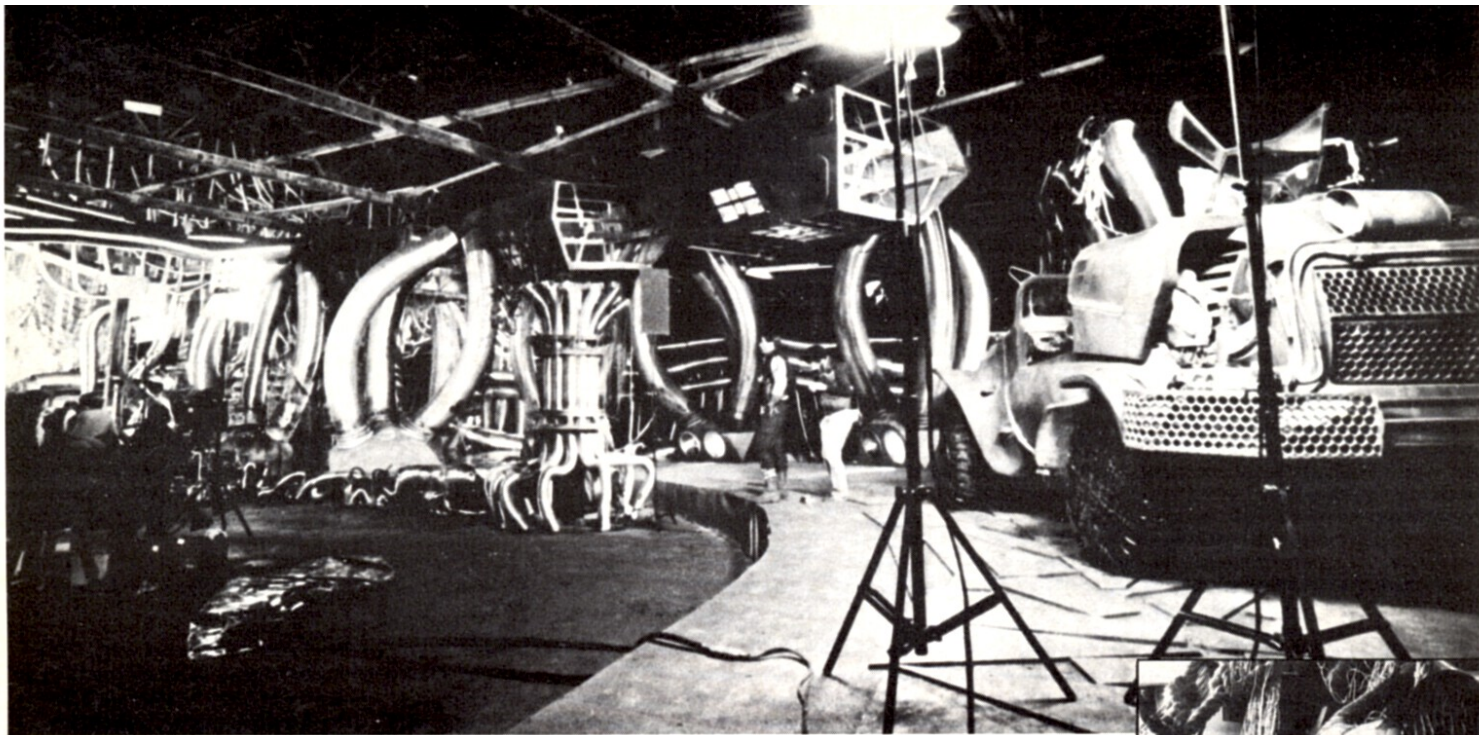
some highlight, LaPorte mixed silver sparkles into his melted gelatin.

Female weightlifters cast as Baracuda Women were covered in a mixture of green pigment and Vaseline. Another character, the Chemist (Harant Alianak) is a sort of brain-damaged pharmacist who provides McNab with drugs and women. Burman fitted the Chemist with comically thick-lensed spectacles and designed hypodermic needles and tubes that run from the character's arms into his neck. Burman also designed about a dozen different masks and two principal makeups for the bald, vaguely deformed mutant children who prowl the planet. The designs will be worn by dwarves hired by Joe Gibb, who worked with Burman on *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS* and *THE MANITOU*.

Burman admitted to having the most fun with the Bat People, nocturnal creatures who live in grain silos. "I wanted to avoid all the vampire clichés with the Bat People," said Burman, "so I made them fat." And how. Fifteen fatsos were constructed of flexible foam that was sealed with polyurethane and sprayed with supple balloon rubber. Hands and feet were slip cast. The costumes that were to be used in close-ups open through the cheeks of the butt; suits for background Bat People were split at the back of the neck so that the heads could be quickly removed for fresh air. Although the costumes, which weigh between 15 and 20 pounds, were designed for actors about 5' 10", the people cast were about 5' 8". Burman approves of the resultant sag. "They look real repulsive," he laughed.

Burman's most novel creation is Chalmers (Andrea Marcovicci), Wolff's beautiful android partner.

Tom Burman and his makeup company The Burman's Studio had a field day designing off-the-wall makeup concepts for *SPACEHUNTER*. For the bat people (left), grotesque beings which hang from the roof of an abandoned grain silo stumbled onto by Wolff (Peter Strauss), Burman stayed away from traditional concepts of vampires. Eric Fiedler is shown (inset) fabricating the foam rubber suits. Burman also came up with concepts for mutant children (top left) and "Zoners" (top right). The "Zoners" makeups shown are worn by Burman (l) and makeup artist Steve LaPorte (r).



The set of the Industrial Swamp of the Barracuda Women (inset) takes shape inside the Dominion Bridge and Iron Works in Vancouver, British Columbia. Wolff's scrambler vehicle is shown (left), and the water tank sunk into the set floor is unfilled.

Chalmers gets her ticket punched rather early in the story, and it was left to Burman to make her "death" interesting. A fully-articulated head sculpted from a mold of Marcovacci's face was fitted with electrodes and resistors just below the surface of the skin. Exposed, the machinery suggests a direct laser hit. When Wolff discovers the android's body, he thumbs a button and disintegrates the entire mechanism; poof!, Chalmers is gone. Burman accomplished the tricky effect by covering the head and a dummy body with a volatile, fiery substance, flammable duplicating fluid. When ignited by an electronic spark squib, the skin immolated in a flash, leaving no residue.

Ellis Burman mechanized brother Tom's design for the Creature, a deadly serpent that menaces the Barracuda Women. The Creature's principal body is 9' long, and also has a pair of 5' sections that arch from the water and a 6' tail. The head and cowl are fully-articulated. Tom Burman takes particular pride in the designs he and Ellis created for SPACEHUNTER because "it was all done on no money. It was really quite a challenge to see if we could turn the work out at all."

Columbia hopes that the picture's 3-D cinematography will be a big selling point, big enough to enable SPACEHUNTER to do

well head-to-head with the the third installment of the STAR WARS saga, RETURN OF THE JEDI. SPACEHUNTER was originally planned as a "flat" film, but the big box office success of FRIDAY THE 13TH—PART III spurred the decision to go with 3-D. Lamont Johnson took great pains to see that the process was not used gratuitously.

The film's 3-D process devised by Ernie McNabb utilizes twin Panavision cameras, one of which looks through a mirror that is angled at 45 degrees. The other lens is at a perpendicular angle to the first, but its "vision" is angled off the mirror. So, in effect, both lenses look straight on. Their points of view are separated by 2½ inches, the average distance between a person's eyes.

"The beauty of the system is that since it uses two cameras, flat prints can be struck very easily," said McNabb. Cinematographer Frank Tidy and McNabb took advantage of the direct, natural light in Utah and captured clear, crisp images. Their success was evident in the dailies, which offered 3-D that was vivid and easy on the eyes.

Julie Weiss summed up her experience on SPACEHUNTER by commenting, "Science fiction films are not child's play; they allow us to publicly dream. But a designer needs a strong collaborator to share the vision. Lamont

Johnson is very strong. He has a game plan. He's directed the film like a field general."

The director himself maintains a realistic attitude when discussing the film. "I can't conceive of any picture having more crossfire," he said. "The weather delays, in particular, put us in the jaws of the devil. Another real problem was Molly Ringwald's hours. She's only 14, so we had to be very careful."

Johnson agrees that his television experience helped him to take command on short notice. "But I have no idea how SPACEHUNTER will do," he said. "I've been around long enough not to try to predict. I thought my picture ONE ON ONE was a nice little story that wouldn't do a great deal. It cost \$2 million and grossed \$20 million. So who can say?"

Only the audience. Will Wolff be able to beat up the Jedi? "No one is going to confuse us with RETURN OF THE JEDI or SUPERMAN III," said Stewart Harding. "We're going to be competing for the same audience, but that is a very large audience. These people don't go to just one movie all summer. We aimed for the entertaining, fun side of science fiction rather than the speculative, intellectual side. People go to movies to be entertained. I don't see how we can possibly be burned unless we make a bad movie." □



A sea serpent designed and built by The Burman's Studio is rigged by a technician in the Industrial Swamp.



"Things ran wild. Everything got too busy—too colorful."

Makeup artist TOM BURMAN

THE BLACK CAULDRON

Disney steps back into darkness with a robust Sword & Sorcery tale

by Dan Scapperotti

There's an expression at the Disney studios—"sweat box session"—that originated decades ago when Walt Disney sat in on the rushes of the latest cartoon and offered his comments. This was well before the advent of air conditioning, and the screening room quickly became a sauna; a sweat box if you will.

Today, the room can get just as hot—the intensity of viewing a new animated work in progress at Disney can still be an explosive, feverish experience.

The latest film to create this friction is **THE BLACK CAULDRON**, a rousing \$20 million, animated sword and sorcery tale planned for a 1985 release, which could be the first film ever to project 3-D holograms into an audience. The film's producer, Joe Hale; directors, Art Stevens, Ted

Berman and Rick Rich; and writers Dave Jonas, Roy Morita and Al Wilson sit confidently (but perhaps a bit nervously) in the screening room—waiting for their creation to ignite on the screen.

The film is based on Lloyd Alexander's five-book adventure series, *The Pyrdain Chronicles*, which consist of *The Book of Three*, *The Black Cauldron*, *The Castle of Llyr*, *Taran Wanderer* and *The High King*. Alexander originally wrote these novels for adolescents; his stories are filled with mysticism and action but contain little bloodshed. Disney's film won't have much gore either, but the studio hopes to garner a larger and more adult audience.

Joe Hale gives a quick run-through of the plot: the cauldron of the title is in the possession of the evil Horned King who immerses his dead enemies in it. Later, they emerge as the invincible, soulless Cauldron Born Warriors. With his army of the dead, the Horned King plans to con-

quer the peaceful land of Pyrdain. The wicked wizard, however, must perform a human sacrifice before each full moon in order to maintain the life of his army and the cauldron.

The Horned King captures Dallben, a wise and good enchanter, as his next victim, and Taran, the enchanter's assistant, sets out to rescue him. Taran is then seized by the evil King and taken back to his castle. Upon their arrival, however, the Horned King discovers that the cauldron has vanished; Taran realizes that if he can find and destroy the cauldron, he can save Pyrdain. Through the aid of Eilonwy, a young princess and enchantress in her own right, Taran escapes and begins his search for the lost cauldron.

On his mission, Taran meets an array of unusual and offbeat characters: Flewddur Fflam, a king who would prefer traveling the countryside, strumming a tune; Doli, an elfin character, who manages to harness the power of invisibility; and Gurgi,

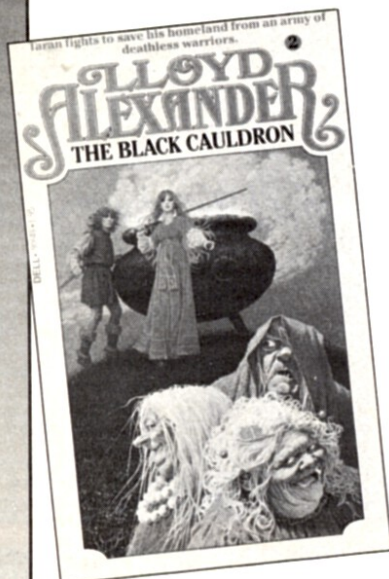
part man, part animal, who desires "crunchings and munchings," but fears "smackings and whackings on my poor tender head."

Another strange creature is Hen Wen, an oracular pig who tells Taran that the cauldron is in the clutches of three witches. Taran searches for and eventually finds the hags, who trade the cauldron for Taran's sword, his most prized possession. The Horned King learns of the cauldron's new location, and taking the captive Dallben along, leads his ghoulish army into attack against Taran and his band.

Alterations had to be made in adapting the large scale epic of the *Chronicles* to the screen. Much of Disney's **BLACK CAULDRON** is based on the introductory novel, *The Book of Three*, but several of the movie's sequences are lifted from the second book. Also, The Horned King becomes the chief villain of the film, although he doesn't even survive the first of five books.

Joe Hale, who previously directed animation special effects on Disney's science fiction epic, **THE BLACK HOLE**, wants to make **THE BLACK CAULDRON** something truly spectacular, and began looking into the possibilities of using holography.

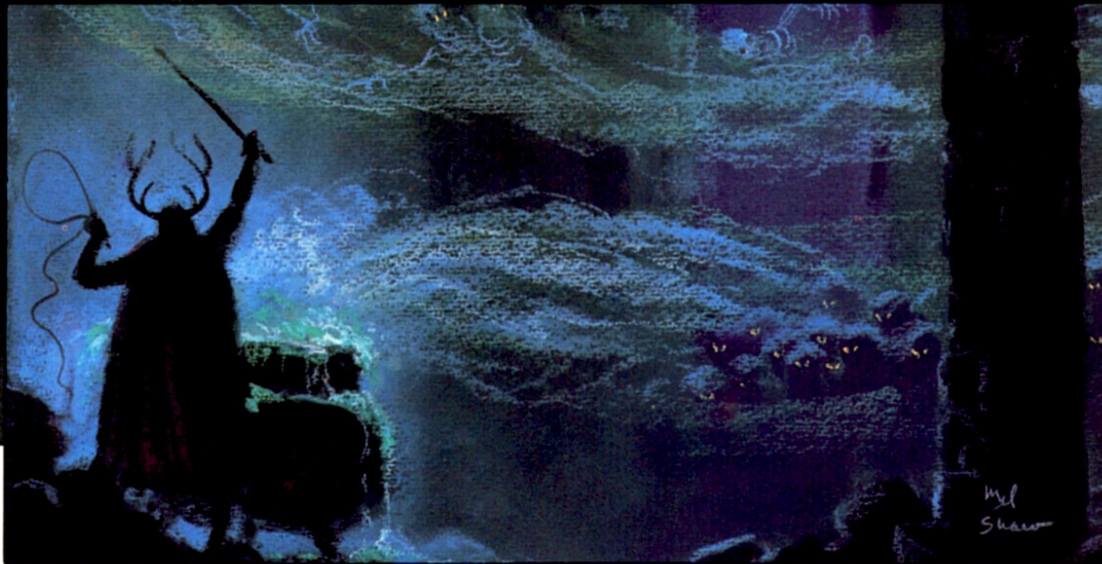
"We're talking to designers over at WED, who design rides at Disneyland and Disney World," Hale said. "Now that they're winding up at EPCOT, we're going to have them work on an effect for the next to the last sequence. We want an effect where the Cauldron-Born Warriors float right out over the audience and into the back of the theater. Our engineers already have the capability to use holograms better than anybody around. Right now, they can give us a hologram of a cauldron in a theater lobby with an endless stream of Cauldron Born coming out and going right up to the top of



Disney based its upcoming animated work on two books by Lloyd Alexander, "The Book of Llyr" and "The Black Cauldron" (above). Alexander wrote the books as children's stories; Disney hopes to get a more adult audience.

Producer Joe Hale (left) and directors Art Stevens, Ted Berman and Richard Rich. Their film may be the first to project 3-D holograms into an audience.





In this preproduction sketch, the Horned King watches his army—the Cauldron Born Warriors—rise from the Black Cauldron.

the theater. There is lot of experimental work being done on this. WED is sending over a creative team to see what they can do for us. We're going to have some kind of spectacular effect, something out of the ordinary."

Voices being used for the characters include Freddie Jones (Dallben), Grant Bardsley (Taran), Susan Sheridan (Eilonwy), Nigel Hawthorne (Flewthur), John Hurt (Horned King), John Byner (Gurgi), Jonathan Winters (King Eidellig) and Phil Fondacar (Creep, the dwarf). An agent in England sent the studio tapes of dozens of voices from which to select the characters. It turned out that the voice chosen for Taran belonged to a 14 year old and that for Princess Eilonwy came from a 34-year-old actress, yet the two characters in the film are the same age.

The lights dim in the screening room, and the screen brightens with the opening shots of a forest. The camera pans down to a small cluster of buildings in a rural setting. What is being shown is a

work print, a technique used for the production of animated films. The first work reels of the film will consist solely of storyboard art and soundtrack. As concepts change, so does the work print. Rough pencil sketches give way to animated pencil drawings. As backgrounds are defined they are added, first in black and white and then color. Where a month before a sequence may have been only two or three story-board diagrams, animated footage of the pencil art now appears. As each step in the arduous process of animation is completed, it's added to the work print.

"Once the directors OK the rough animation scenes, the layout and pencil backgrounds go to the background department, and they paint and color them," explained Joe Hale. "At the same time the scenes themselves are being cleaned up, and then they go to the Ink and Paint department, where they're produced in color. From all of this, we get a daily color print. We then cut these prints into the work

reel."

Following the screening, the sweat box members buzz with excitement and begin discussing the film's strong points. It's a big film for the new animators, who cut their eyeteeth on 1981's *THE FOX AND THE HOUND* and *MICKEY'S CHRISTMAS CAROL*, a theatrical short that is scheduled for a Christmas '83 release. Prior to *THE FOX AND THE HOUND*, the studio's previous cartoon feature, the immensely popular *THE RESCUERS*, was the last to depend on the talents of the veteran animators. In the past few years, Disney has developed a special training program, headed by Eric Larson, a 45-year Disney veteran. From the thousands of applications received, less than 100 were selected for Disney apprenticeship, and only 45 completed the full course.

The animators have experimented with new and old techniques for this film. In one sequence Hen Wen dashes down a path pursued by *gwythaints*,

dragon-like vultures who act as the eyes and ears of the Horned King. The scenery on either side of the path lashes by as Hen Wen runs toward the camera. This scene called for the use of animated backgrounds, a technique used as early as the silent Mickey Mouse cartoons, but according to the staff, this is the first time it is being used in a feature.

THE BLACK CAULDRON is being shot in 70mm, the studio's first use of this large screen format since 1956's *SLEEPING BEAUTY*. Studio insiders claim that the film will rely on a pervading atmosphere of horror, with foreboding settings reminiscent of the studio's early cartoon work, as viewed in *THE SKELETON DANCE*, *THE OLD MILL* and the Evil Queen's dungeon in *SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS*.

Ron Miller, the studio's executive producer, believes *THE BLACK CAULDRON* is the newcomers' *SNOW WHITE*—a ground breaking experience for both animators and audience. □

Comedian John Byner (below), the voice of Gurgi, a part-man, part-animal creature, "crunches and munches" (as his character would put it) on an apple. Note the concept sketches of Gurgi on wall. Right: Early preproduction sketch of Hen Wen, the all-knowing pig, being threatened by the Horned King.



Something Wicked This Way Comes

The behind-the-scenes story of
Disney's \$23 million adaptation of
Ray Bradbury's fantasy classic.

Article by Stephen Rebello

In the fall of 1981, a few days before filming was to start on **SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES**, author Ray Bradbury wandered quietly through the streets of Green Town, an idealized version of his autobiographical, turn-of-the-century mid-American town that had been built

on the Disney Studio lot. Bradbury glanced over the shop window displays, moved past a slowly turning barber pole, admired the vintage cars, and looked up at the two simple wood frame houses where his youthful heroes, Will Halloway and Jim Nightshade, would live.

There were tears of joy in Bradbury's twinkling eyes, and an ear-tickling grin of absolute pleasure. A mere 25 years after he had originally intended, his parable of two adolescent boys and a soul-

snatching carnival was about to be brought to life.

Nearly 18 months later—following a troubled and costly production schedule that saw the film all but taken out of director Jack Clayton's hands in postproduction—Bradbury wept again, this time at the conclusion of the

lengthy sessions at which James Homer's dynamic score was recorded.

It's not difficult to imagine that Bradbury's tears were due as much to joy as relief. The intervening months had been difficult for the entire crew, with the project marred by dissension among the key creative talents and a preview screening deemed so dis-

astrous by studio chiefs that the release of the film was delayed by six months.

But Bradbury's tears seemed to signal that all is well in Green Town, his poetic story having

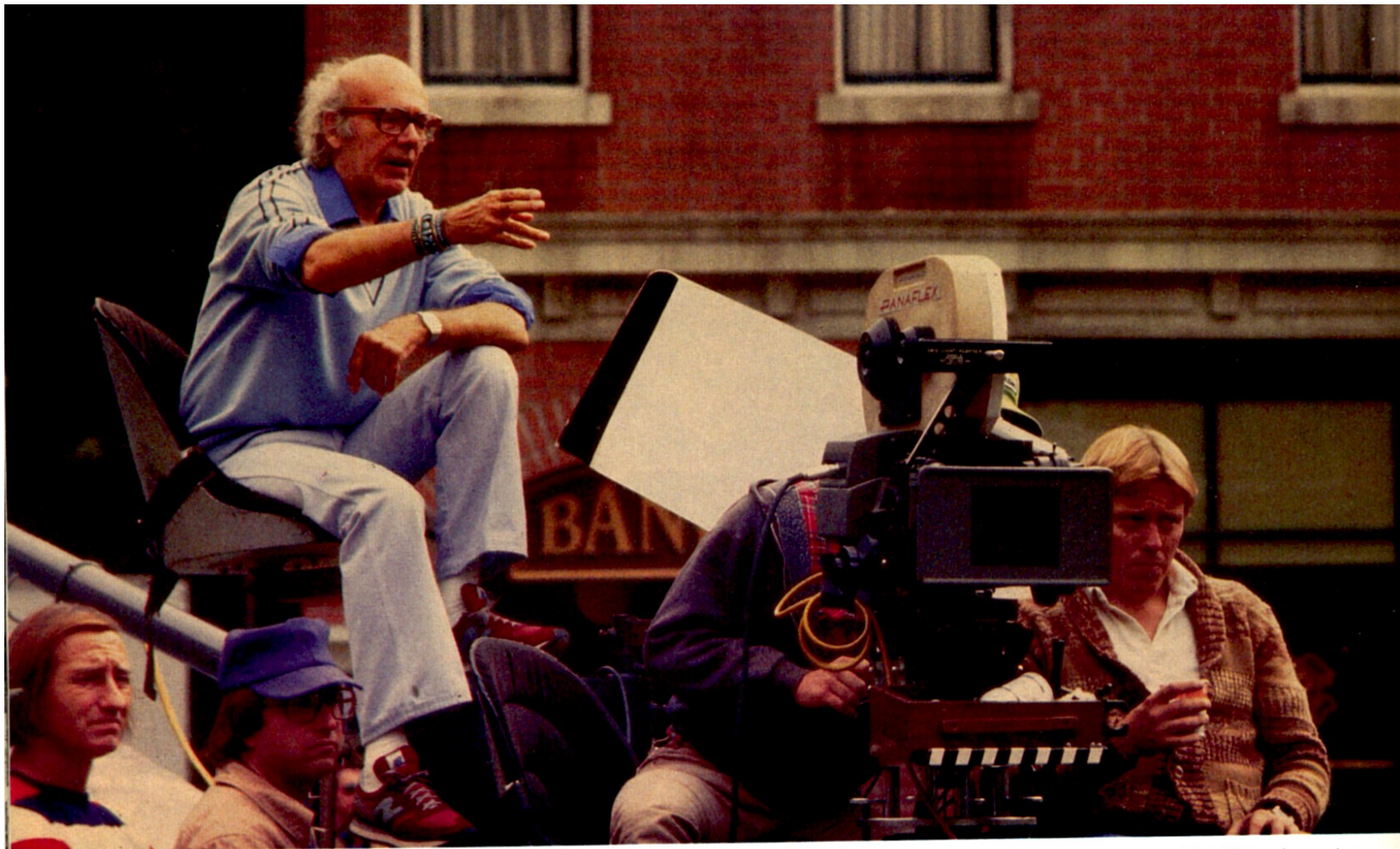


Jonathan Pryce portrays the malevolent Mr. Dark, proprietor of a mysterious and seductive carnival that invades the sleepy quiet of Green Town, Illinois.





Author-screenwriter Ray Bradbury strikes a statesman-like pose in front of the 20'x20' miniature of Dark's Carnival, built for the climactic moment when a storm literally wipes it off the face of the earth. Mounted upside down at the top of a soundstage for the pyrotechnic destruction sequences, the miniature was also turned right side up and used for several establishing shots, photographed in front of the huge twilight-colored backing shown here. Built on a one-twelfth scale, the miniature featured a ferris wheel made of lead, which could be twisted and pulled out of shape realistically.



Director Jack Clayton (upper left) explains to camera operator Elliott Davis (obscured behind camera) and first assistant cameraman Dusty Blauvelt (right) how he wants a shot lined up on the elaborate \$2 million Green Town set. Cinematographer Steve Burum (wearing the blue cap, lower left) eyes the proceedings warily.

apparently survived the rough and rugged journey to the big screen. "I think it's beautiful," beamed the 63-year-old author, talking up the film with the zest of a carny barker. "It's certainly the closest film to my written work that's ever been done."

With technicians rushing frantically—and in some cases, futilely—in the final weeks to complete the film on time, audiences were poised to discover for themselves whether Bradbury, the novelist, had been successfully captured on film by Bradbury, the screenwriter.

But one observer didn't have to wait for opening night. Ray Bradbury, the critic, had already formed his opinion. "It's beautiful," he smiled. "It makes me cry."

Few novels as acclaimed as *Something Wicked This Way Comes* have had as hard a time making the transition to the screen. Gene Kelly, Sam Peckinpah and Steven Spielberg all gave thought at one time to tackling the material, but moved on to other projects. Yet, ironically, *Something Wicked This Way Comes* was born in and for the movies.

For explanation, we need to skip back to what moviemakers call the backstory. The year is 1948, and 28-year-old Ray Bradbury is scratching out a living as a West Coast-based fantasist, placing stories in such magazines as *Mademoiselle* and *Super Science Stories*. His latest sale—a compact gem called "The Black Ferris" that appears in *Weird Tales*—opens with a silkenly horrific allure,

and never lets up:

"The carnival had come to town like an October wind, like a dark bat flying over the cold lake, bones rattling in the night, mourning, sighing, whispering up the tents in the dark rain."

The short story features a number of key elements that will later find their way into *Something Wicked This Way Comes*: two boys, itching with smalltown boredom, who more than meet their match in a strangely seductive carnival; a ride on the midway that can age or regress someone according to the direction of its spin; and a climactic scene in which the boys trap the villain on the spinning ride until he ages into an old man and crumbles away.

"The Black Ferris" generated little immediate notice. But Bradbury—a prolific writer whose early output

averaged a story a week—soon deepened and developed as a humanistic, morally-attuned writer. His first novel, *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), proved a landmark for its scope, vision and emphasis on human nature over gadgetry. Three years later, *Fahrenheit 451* presented a satirical indictment of the complacency that fuels totalitarianism.

Hollywood rapidly sniffed out a genuine original. Two early stories served as the basis for *BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS* (1952) and *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE* (1953). Interestingly, Bradbury's first original screenplay was for neither a horror nor science fiction film, but for John Huston's adaptation of *MOBY DICK* (1956).

Although a number of critics hammered the picture, Bradbury neverthe-

less joined the ranks of the film colony's elite, and was routinely invited to screenings of new movies. In 1956, one such evening would have lasting reverberations. "Gene Kelly invited my wife and I to a screening of *INVITATION TO THE DANCE*," Bradbury recalled. "I always had a hunger to give Kelly a piece of my material. Well, I came out of that screening just *chomping* at the bit. I went home and immediately rummaged through my files looking for something to suit Kelly. Stories going back 20 years! I came across 'The Black Ferris' and something clicked."

Bradbury spent the next few weeks expanding the story into a 75-page screen treatment titled *DARK CARNIVAL*, which he hand-delivered to Kelly's house. "I said it was his for free," Bradbury recalled. "I told him once he'd gotten the money to do the movie, he could pay me to write the screenplay."

Regrettably, *INVITATION TO THE DANCE* was a financial and critical disappointment, and Kelly found it impossible to obtain the financing for *DARK CARNIVAL*. "By then," Bradbury explained, "I really *believed* in the thing. I said, 'To hell with it, I'll just turn it into a novel.' I spent the next two years doing just that."

In the reworking of *DARK CARNIVAL*, Bradbury dredged deep into his boyhood memories and grownup regrets to fashion one of imaginative fiction's bona fide originals. *Something Wicked This Way Comes* was published by Simon and Schuster in 1962, taking its title from the over-the-

Jason Robards, Vidal Peterson and Shawn Carson frolic in the streets following the destruction of Dark's carnival. Several other shots from this sequence—showing the town's residents restored to normal—were dropped during postproduction.



cauldron mutterings of "Macbeth's" three witches. Arguably Bradbury's richest and most deeply-felt book, it's the tale of two 12 year olds—Will Holloway, sunny and unshakably good; and Jim Nightshade, darker and more ambivalent—whose lives are altered by their confrontation with Cooger and Dark's Pandemonium Shadow Show.

The mysterious carnival is presided over by the much tattooed Illustrated Man, Mr. Dark, whose midway attractions thrive on the thwarted longings of Green Town's lost and heartsick. Will and Jim watch in horror as a old schoolmarm emerges from the Mirror Maze as a young girl, as a lonely shopkeeper wallows in orgiastic delight in the Temple of Temptations, and as one of their own fathers—a haunted, broken shell of a man—witnesses his own aging and death.

The carnival promises the fulfillment of every secret longing, but each of the town's walking wounded pays a terrible price for their fantasy. Ultimately, it is Will's dad—a character Bradbury unconsciously modeled after his own father—who defeats the eerie Dust Witch, defeats Mr. Dark, and saves the soul of Jim Nightshade. More poetic than horrific, and less an allegory than (in author Stephen King's terms) "moral horror," the book is both chilling and touching, a multi-tiered coming-of-age story that has spawned some 21 printings, undoubtedly several hundred thousand book reports, and an indeterminate number of restless nights.

"*Something Wicked This Way Comes* sums up my entire life of loving Lon Chaney and the magicians and grotesques he played in his early films," Bradbury explained to author Stephen King in *Danse Macabre*. "I was a raving film maniac long before I hit my eighth year. When I was nine, I became a full-time magician after seeing Blackstone on stage in my home town [Waukegan, Illinois]. Magic and magicians and Chaney and libraries have filled my life."

Even before its publication, the book propelled Bradbury back on the Hollywood merry-go-round. "There were lots of movie people who got excited about the possibilities of filming it," Bradbury recalled. "Over the years I've easily had 50 meetings on it. Something always intervenes."

The problem was how to transpose Bradbury's soaring imagery to the rigors of celluloid. His sentimentality, elegantly idiosyncratic dialogue and the peculiar juxtaposition of the workaday and the magical all work marvelously on paper, but less so on film [see sidebar, page 4]. To help insure that *Something Wicked This Way Comes* would reach the handful of filmmakers he believed had the touch of a poet, Bradbury mailed copies of the book to a select group.

Among the recipients was English director Jack Clayton, who had served as assistant producer on *MOBY DICK*. Clayton had subsequently turned to directing, and came to America in 1962 with *THE INNOCENTS*, an adaptation of Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* [see story, page 51]. "I'd heard that Clayton was going to show the film at

Arthur Knight's class at USC," Bradbury said. "I gave him a typewritten copy of the story, and told him I wanted him to direct it. Clayton thought it was lovely, but nothing came of it. When the book was published, I sent him another copy."

No serious effort was made to adapt the book until producers Robert Chartoff and Irwin Winkler (*ROCKY*, *RAGING BULL*) optioned the book a decade later. "We wracked our brains trying to figure out who we could ask to do the screenplay," recalled Winkler. "Finally, we asked Ray, and he wrote a marvelous screenplay. Then we tried casting the right director, and Ray suggested Sam Peckinpah. The thinking was to put Ray's poetry up against someone really tough, someone who'd go against the grain of Ray's lyricism."

In the beginning, Peckinpah exhibited the joyful enthusiasm of a first-year film student, and meetings were held with Bradbury to iron out the details. Ironically, actor Jason Robards (*JULIA*, *ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN*) was invited to one dinner at which he was asked to play the malevolent Mr. Dark. "We didn't discuss the script or anything," recalled Robards, who would be cast a decade later as the kindly Charles Halloway. "I don't know what happened with his idea to do the film. I never heard from him again."

Winkler had firmed up a production deal with 20th Century-Fox. But just as all systems seemed go, an internecine studio conflict erupted—which wouldn't be the picture's last. "The new regime at Fox couldn't see their way clear to moving ahead on the project," Winkler recalled. "They saw it as a kid's picture. That was a great sin to carry around with you before *STAR WARS* and *E.T.*"

Winkler and Chartoff searched for a new studio, replacing Peckinpah with Mark Rydell (*ON GOLDEN POND*), who worked on a rewrite with Bradbury. But they were never able to secure funding and their option dropped. The project then sat dormant until 1976, when Bradbury ran into Peter Vincent Douglas, the 20-year-old son of longtime friend Kirk Douglas. An accomplished still photographer, Peter had aspirations of becoming a producer like his brother Michael—who packaged *ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST*—and was searching for properties (he later produced *THE FINAL COUNTDOWN*). When Bradbury mentioned that *Something Wicked This Way Comes* was up for grabs, Douglas—a long-time fan of the book—quickly convinced his father to option the book through his Bryna film company.

Not long afterwards, Kirk and Peter Douglas took a lunch with director Jack Clayton. In discussing possible projects, Clayton floored both father and son by spontaneously suggesting *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES* as a likely candidate. From then on, things happened fast. Immediately after his lunch with Kirk and Peter, Clayton had an appointment with David Picker at Paramount, at which the Bradbury film was brought up. "Lo and behold," Peter Douglas recalled, "we

signed a deal with the studio almost immediately!"

The project moved to the Paramount lot, where Clayton and Bradbury spent months devising a new attack on the screenplay. "It was a terrific writer-director relationship," said Bradbury, who turned in a first draft weighing in at some 260 pages—the equivalent of a five-hour movie. "Then Clayton made me cut and cut and cut! When I was young, I thought editing was hard, boring work. Now, I think it's the second greatest art. It's a process of crushing things into metaphors so pure and so right you wouldn't miss what was cut."

The Clayton-Bradbury collaboration eventually ran a tight 120 pages. In the process, the narrative was streamlined, the rococo dialogue rendered more conventional, and the novel's fantastic elements toned down a bit. Triumphantly, the screenplay was messengered to the office of Paramount's board chairman, Barry Diller, where it arrived in the midst of a in-house power struggle typical of top Hollywood brass, with Diller battling studio president David Picker.

Since Picker had backed the project, Diller's disapproval was virtually pro forma. Sure enough, several hours after the screenplay was received, the project was officially scrubbed. The news didn't go over well with Clayton, a volatile artist who once challenged film critics to a public slugfest. Charming and gentle on the surface, Clayton unleashed



"Steven Spielberg promised me he was going to do the film. But then there was this mysterious silence. He never did explain why he pulled away."

**AUTHOR-SCREENWRITER
RAY BRADBURY**

what he admitted is his "very violent temper": he stomped down to Diller's office and, in the course of events, threw several chairs through the plate glass windows—which had been closed at the time.

"I had been working hard for six months on that screenplay—very hard," Clayton explained. "Within three hours of my sending it to him, Diller gave me back the screenplay. It

The title page of Ray Bradbury's "The Black Ferris," the original source of the screen treatment upon which "Something Wicked This Way Comes" was based. The story appeared in the May, 1948 edition of "Weird Tales" (shown inset).





"I spent a day at one effects facility asking simple, one-sentence questions. It took them 15 minutes of the most complicated patter to answer me."

**DIRECTOR
JACK CLAYTON**

was impossible for him to have read the script. I wouldn't have objected to his response if the script had been rejected a few days later, but three hours was just too much!

"It's almost soul-destroying having one of your pet projects decimated," added Clayton. "It can take a year, literally, getting over it. The fact that you've been paid for the heart and soul you've injected into the material is incidental."

Peter Douglas continued to shop the film around, fielding tentative offers from Jonathan Demme (MELVIN AND HOWARD), John Carpenter and Steven Spielberg, who announced his plans to film the novel as his follow-up to CE3K. However, the *Wunderkind* ultimately disappointed Bradbury.

"Spielberg promised me he was going to do the film," Bradbury recalled, a touch of bitterness in his voice. "We had a nice friendship going, lunch and dinner several times to talk it over. But then there was this long, mysterious silence. He never called, never wrote, never really explained why he finally pulled away. At least for politeness' sake, I wish he had picked up the phone and told me something. But he didn't."

Costumed extras crowd the entrance to the carousel tent of Dark's Carnival, built at Disney's Golden Oak Ranch. Production designer Richard MacDonald gave the carnival an ephemeral, Gypsy-like look to accentuate its magical qualities.



Without Steven Spielberg or an interested studio, **SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES** spent what Ray Bradbury termed "a few nomadic years." And then the Disney organization made themselves heard again, principally in the person of Tom Wilhite, the zestful 30-year-old head of production who has done more to breath life into the studio than anyone since Uncle Walt.

"I grew up in a small town where, to my friends and me, Halloween was more magical than Christmas," said Wilhite, explaining the story's appeal. "I also liked the theme of people wanting something more, then learning where and who you are is often better."

With Wilhite's endorsement—and backed with a \$10 million budget—a production deal was finalized in the summer of 1980. Bradbury, for one, couldn't have been happier. "I wanted to help the Disney studio," he explained. "After all, I was a Mickey Mouse Club member when I was 12 years old and I worked with Walt for two or three years before he died. Everything else they had, like Disneyworld and the EPCOT project, was going fine, but they'd had a rough time with the movies. I wanted this to be the one to turn it all around."

The first item on Wilhite's and Douglas' agenda was finding the right director, no little feat, as past experience had proven. After talking with Tony Scott (*THE HUNGER*) and David Lynch (*THE ELEPHANT MAN*), the studio came close to signing Carroll Ballard (*THE BLACK STALLION*). But producer Peter Douglas championed Jack Clayton. "No insult intended towards some of the others, but I never really believed in them," said Douglas. "I wanted Clayton, but the studio had concerns about his not having made a film in eight years."

Clayton's most recent credit had been for *THE GREAT GATSBY* (1974), a disaster with critics. Since then, he had become enmeshed in several abortive projects—including a love story for Barbra Streisand and, of course, *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES*—without any success. That worried the Disney execs, but Clayton had never been especially prolific, even when he was considered red-hot, following the

release of *ROOM AT THE TOP* (1961), his first feature.

A meticulous craftsman who worked his way up through the ranks before switching over to independent production, Clayton broke in as a director with an Oscar-winning short, *THE BESPOKE OVERCOAT* (1957). Moving into features, he followed *ROOM AT THE TOP* with *THE INNOCENTS* (1962). He only directed three other features: *THE PUMPKIN EATER* (1964), *OUR MOTHER'S HOUSE* (1967) and *THE GREAT GATSBY*. "I wish there were more films to my credit," Clayton admitted, "but most people don't realize how much time is spent in developing material which never gets made. Also, I have an absolute horror of repeating myself, be it technique or subject matter."

Wilhite was just as concerned with the quality of Clayton's output as with the quantity. "I sensed a certain 'coolness' in his direction," Wilhite explained. "THE INNOCENTS, for example, has a certain detachment. Clayton made us comfortable by pointing out that *Something Wicked This Way Comes* is more emotional material than either *The Great Gatsby* or *Turn Of The Screw*."

If the studio was a bit hesitant about Clayton, the production team were no less cautious about the Disney organization, and the possibilities of creative control. "On my first meeting with Wilhite and [studio president] Ron Miller, I told them, 'If you're expecting me to make a horror film or bit of whimsy, I'm not doing it,'" Clayton recalled. "They wanted to know how I planned to handle the frightening bits, and I told them, 'The way things scare me!'"

Apparently, each side convinced the other, and Clayton signed the deal to direct. First order of business: Clayton and Bradbury co-wrote yet another screenplay draft. "Time had given me a totally new slant on the material," Clayton said. "I came to realize that the fantasy of the story must stem from the reality; it must have a context. That's one reason why the town was so important. If it were in any way contemporary, the audience would be wondering why the two boys weren't smoking dope and playing computer games instead of being fascinated by this strange carnival. Giving the fantastic a context also made the human relationships emerge more strongly and clearly, particularly Will and his father. In the book, their relationship is sort of idealized—loving and constant. For the film, I felt there must be some sore spot, some source of friction and antagonism."

After Bradbury wrapped up the rewrite, Clayton called in an old friend, novelist-lawyer John Mortimer (*RUMPOLE OF THE OLD BAILEY*, *THE INNOCENTS*) for a final polish. Next, Clayton assembled his creative team, including production designer Richard MacDonald and cinematographer Stephen Burum, who replaced Laszlo Kovaks (*FRANCES*) after Kovaks mysteriously walked off the project.

Burum, a long-time associate of Francis Ford Coppola (he photographed *THE OUTSIDERS* and

worked on *APOCALYPSE NOW*), screened Clayton's previous films to get a sense of what the director would be looking for. "What becomes clear is how the director views things, how he thinks and how he views the world," Burum explained.

MacDonald, one of the industry's best known—and highest paid—production designers (his credits include *ALTERED STATES* and *CANNERY ROW*), became one of Clayton's closest collaborators. "I thought it was perfect movie material—slightly mystical with Faustian overtones, yet rooted in reality as well," said MacDonald, a bearish eccentric with an accent thicker than London fog. "Even as I read the script, I started sketching. The center of Green Town suggested a circle, the evil circus another circle."

Initially, location scouts scoured the countryside looking for a village that could serve as Green Town, but the studio came up with the idea of building an entire town on the Disney lot—a standing set that could be used, redressed, on other films. While Clayton originally preferred going on location, MacDonald jumped at the opportunity.

"When you think of the hazards of weather and trying to find all the elements you actually want, it makes sense to build," MacDonald explained. "On location, you're always patching and hiding things that aren't quite in period. Besides, when you have an opportunity to build something like this, why deny yourself?"

Accordingly, MacDonald and artist Joe Hurley designed elegant, gilt-edged Victorian storefronts, wrought iron gazebos and a spectacular library—all hugging a graceful town square. "Green Town was designed to have absolutely straightforward 1890s-style buildings," MacDonald explained. "I wanted to evoke a familiar feeling from the audience, an 'Oh yes, I've been here before and it's alright' kind of feeling."

"On the other hand," MacDonald added, "the carnival was to be a total fantasy facade made of veils and swirls, colors and domes. I wanted to leave a blurred impression by not showing too much, a 'Did I see that?' feeling. I tried for an approach much like *THE INNOCENTS*: understatement, with plenty of room for mood and atmosphere."

Perhaps the most obvious element of overstatement in MacDonald's designs was the cost, estimated at a cool \$2 million for Green Town alone. MacDonald's designs for Dark's Circus—shot on sets built at Disney's Golden Oak Ranch in Newhall, California—were considerably less elaborate. Where Green Town featured angles, solidity and regularity, the carnival sets were awash with curves, impermanence and flourishes—a "fantasy confection," according to MacDonald.

Primarily a series of flat facades, the designs stressed elements key to the plot: the Temple of Temptation, a sort of sensual Disneyland; the Mirror Maze, where the old and broken are shown the possibilities of a better life; and the Freak Tent, displaying living "waxworks," lost souls temp-



ted by the carnival's enticements.

Interestingly, MacDonald did *not* build one of the film's key set-pieces, a spectacular carousel capable of aging or regressing riders according to the direction of its spin. Clayton needed something ornate and a little ominous, and found what he was looking for inside two 40-foot trailers: the dismantled remains of a 70-year-old brass and wooden carousel that had last seen service in California's Beverly Park in 1974. A crew at Bradley & Kaye, a California firm specializing in rehabbing old amusement park rides, spent four months painting and polishing the 40 hand-carved wooden horses and refitting the ancient mechanisms.

The carousel would be featured throughout the film, most notably a sequence where Mr. Dark gets trapped on the whirling ride, aging and disintegrating to a pile of dust and bones. For this climactic moment, Clayton admitted the need to rely on elaborate special effects. For the rest of the film, however, he hoped to soft-peddle pyrotechnics in favor of the subtle, atmospheric approach he had taken with *THE INNOCENTS*.

"For this kind of film, I think makeup tricks, flashy lighting and exploding lasers would be totally wrong," Clayton explained. "I wanted to let the characters and the relationships carry the audience into the fantasy, *not* have the machinery do it for you. I took the line that you could choose to look at any event in the film in two ways—literally, or only *possibly* happening.

"The Dust Witch [the novel's blind

emmissary of Mr. Dark] was a headache in that light," Clayton added. "We reconceptualized the character to make her a combination of the 'Dust Witch', 'The Most Beautiful Woman in the World' and the 'Fortune Teller.' To some characters in the story, she appears enticing and beautiful. But others see her true nature."

Since some special effects would still be needed, Clayton began hunting for an effects house. A rather reluctant novice to the game, Clayton admitted the experience left an unpleasant aftertaste. "I'm not decrying people who make films using a lot of effects," he said, "but it's as if a whole new industry has emerged, with its own jargon. I spent the whole day at one particular effects facility asking simple, one-sentence questions. It took them 15 minutes of the most complicated patter to answer me. From that day, I decided to use the most *simple* means of achieving the required effects."

Clayton decided to handle all, or at least most, of the film's effects during principal photography, using physical effects shot live on stage instead of complicated postproduction opticals. Pointedly ducking the use of Disney's in-house effects unit, Clayton hired mechanical effects designer Alan Hall (*CAT PEOPLE*, *POPEYE*). However, the absence of a full effects team during preproduction, and the lack of detailed storyboards covering effects shots, ultimately cost the film tremendous amounts of time and money later on. But Clayton was satisfied. At least for the moment.

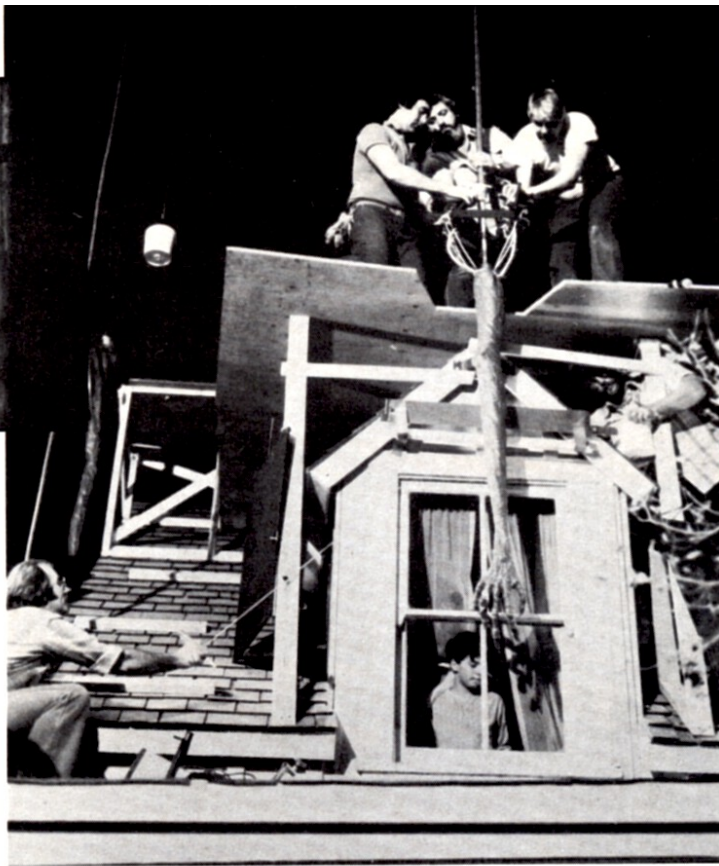


GREEN TOWN, ILLINOIS, an idealized turn-of-the-century town, was built from the ground up on the Disney lot (top, above). A crew of 200 labored for three months on the one-acre set, the largest built in Hollywood in nearly a generation. Though Disney execs first backed the idea of the permanent installation, they came to regret its \$2 million price tag. Below: Production designer Richard MacDonald (left) and director Jack Clayton take a break in front of the wrought-iron gazebo.





A GIANT HAND was built by effects supervisor Alan Hall to represent one of the Dust Witch's attacks against Jim and Will, an effect later deleted from the film. As many as six people were needed to manipulate the intricate cable controls for the hand, which was rigged to emit dust and "snail slime" (methacel and silver powder) from the fingertips. Right: Clay Pinney, Pat Domenico and Jack Sampson work the counter-balanced arm from the top platform, as Bob Willard (right) and Curt Dickson assist from below. The camera's view was from inside the room, looking out past actor Shawn Carson. Above: Alan Hall and cinematographer Steve Burum (left) discuss the best way to light and photograph the effect. The pair rarely agreed.



With the film's budget upped to \$16 million, and production slotted to begin at the end of September, 1981, Clayton turned his attention to assembling his cast. Perhaps the easiest decision was that of Jason Robards as Charles Halloway. Will's melancholic, world-beaten father. Robards had been associated with the film since the early 1970s, when Sam Peckinpah wanted to cast him as the villainous Mr. Dark. But Bradbury and Clayton always thought of Robards as the kindly father type. "Robards *did* seem inevitable for the role of Mr. Halloway," Clayton said. "I must admit I have an instinct for casting. You see, I'm not intelligent, I'm just full of instinct."

Instinct, apparently, led Clayton to cast a virtual unknown—34-year-old Welsh-born actor Jonathan Pryce—as Mr. Dark, a showy role that demands menace, sexual swagger and intimations of incredible evil. Finding the right actor for Mr. Dark had always been a key element of any screen adaptation, and Bradbury had offered several possibilities during the project's long tenure, including Peter O'Toole and Christopher Lee. Studio head Tom Wilhite had lobbied for Rutger Hauer (BLADE RUNNER), but Clayton insisted on an unknown face.

"I'd never heard of Pryce when Clayton phoned me from London," admitted producer Peter Douglas. "He didn't look anything at all like how I imagined Mr. Dark. I wasn't convinced until Clayton sent me a videotape of a scene from 'Comedians' by Trevor Griffiths, for which Pryce won a Tony Award. It was a semi-horrific scene with two ventriloquist's dummies. Once I'd seen it, Jonathan was Mr. Dark."

When first contacted, the Shakespearean-trained actor hadn't read

the novel. "Science fiction and horror literally terrify me," explained Pryce, a slight, shy man with a cutting sense of the absurd. "But I liked Mr. Dark because he's the one character I felt would be able to retain the book's language in the film. Also, Dark could be as real or unreal as I chose to make him. I'm not the way the character is described. I'm not grotesque, with blood-red waistcoats and black suits glistening with hair. All that suggested a way to go with the role that didn't much interest me, nor Jack Clayton."

With mere weeks remaining before the start of shooting, three of the film's major roles remained uncast: the Dust Witch, and the film's young heroes, Will and Jim. For the former, Clayton was particularly fussy. "I wanted someone beautiful," he said, "an exotic woman who could convey the idea of being a witch without resorting to the standard Disney concept of someone with a hooked nose and a wart."

Scores of comely actresses and models were whisked in and out of the studio, without any success. At the virtual last minute, Clayton again relied on his instincts and called in sultry black actress Pam Grier for a reading. Grier had starred in a number of exploitation films—COFFY (1973), FOXY BROWN (1974) and FRIDAY FOSTER (1975), to name a few—but it was her harrowing performance as a drug-crazed prostitute in FORT APACHE, THE BRONX that gave her the type of critical kudos that helped line her up for Clayton's call.

Tom Wilhite blasted the rumor that Disney was wary of casting a black in a major role—SONG OF THE SOUTH's Uncle Tom-ism remains a touchy subject for the studio. "My concern was not in casting a black woman, but in casting a black

woman as a villain." Wilhite explained. "It's unfortunate that the only black has a negative role. I would rather we'd been able to cast Mr. Crosetti [the barber] or Mr. Tetley [the tobacconist] as black men, but the story isn't structured that way."

With Grier signed as the Dust Witch, Clayton assembled a strong ensemble for the supporting roles: Diane Ladd (Mrs. Nightshade), Royal Dano (Tom Fury, the lightning rod salesman), Scott Wilson (the sheriff), Dick Davalos (Crosetti, the barber) and Ellen Geer (Mrs. Halloway). Yet how, and where, to snag two convincing, non-Hollywood kids for the film's central roles? With scant days to go before production and the meter ticking, Clayton was beginning to despair.

"I'd gone searching to New York, Chicago, San Francisco and to little theaters, with no luck," Clayton said. "My first meeting with an American 'youngster' of 10 was incredible! I asked him about sports, school and the upcoming holidays, and all he could say was, 'Did you see me in this or that? I've got a great spot on the TV tonight.' He was so hardened, so 'professional,' it was like talking with someone of 25."

Clayton finally found his Jim Nightshade through actress Karen Black, who suggested her 13-year-old nephew, Shawn Carson, for a reading. Carson, who played the younger brother in Tobe Hooper's FUNHOUSE, struck the director as possessing some of the moody turbulence of the book's more mischievous youth. For Will, Clayton selected a dignified, responsive 14-year-old, Vidal Peterson, a veteran of community theater and the telefilm, MURDER IN TEXAS.

"I made video tests with both boys, separately and together," Clayton explained. "It was all very close to the

Cast & Credits

A Buena-Vista release. 4/83. 94 mins. In color and Dolby Stereo. Directed by Jack Clayton. Producer, Peter Vincent Douglas. Screenplay by Ray Bradbury, based on his novel. Cinematographer, Stephen H. Burum. Music, James Horner. Production designer, Richard MacDonald. Film editor, Argyle Nelson, Barry Mark Gordon. Special visual effects, Lee Dyer. Costumes, Ruth Myers. Unit production manager, Richard Learman. 1st assistant director, Dan Kolsrud. 2nd assistant director, Lisa Marmon. Creative consultant, Jeanne Sims. Art directors, Richard B. Mansbridge, Richard James Lawrence. Production illustrator, Joe Hurley. Set decorator, Richard Simpson. Construction coordinator, Dennis De Waay. Associate producer, Dan Kolsrud. Additional second assistant directors, Chris D. Miller, Scott Cameron. Assistant film editor, Axel Anton Hubert. Sound supervisor, Bob Hathaway. Special sound effects, Richard R. Portman, David M. Horton. Supervising sound effects editor, Joseph A. Parker. Supervising music editor, Al McGuire. Dialogue editor, Bruce Bisenz. Re-recording supervisor, Richard R. Portman. Re-recording mixers, Nick Alphin, Frank C. Regula. Casting, Pam Polifroni, Virginia Higgins. Script supervisor, Edle Bakke. Costume supervisor, Jack Sandeen. Creative makeup, Robert J. Schiffer. Makeup, Gary Li Ddard, Jim Scribner. Hairstylist, Edie Panda. Effects animation supervisor, Michael Wolf. Animation production coordinator, Ron Stangl. Animators, William Allen Blyth, Ed Coffey, Gail Fox, Allan Gonzales, John Norton, Darrell Rooney, Scott Santoro. Composite supervisor, Quint Colver. Scene planning, Richard T. Sullivan. Airbrush, W. L. Arance. Special effects consultant, Harrison Ellenshaw. 1st assistant director, special effects, Steve McEveety. Additional photography, Jan Kaesser. Special photographic effects, Art Cruickshank, Peter Anderson, Phil Meador. Special kaelidoscopic effects, Symmetron. Computer graphics, MAGI-Synthavision. Additional visual effects, Van Der Veer Photo Effects, Visual Concepts Engineering. Optical Supervisor, Bill Kilduff. Mechanical special effects supervisor, Alan Hall, Hans Metz, Isodoro Raponi, Willard Livingston. Matte artists, Jesse Silver, Michael Lloyd. Production coordinator, Bayard Veller, Susan Becton, Cardan Walker. Stunts, Gary Combs, George Robothan, Charles Tamburro, Bobby Porter, Patrick Romano, Jeff Viola.

Charles Halloway . . . Jason Robards
Mr. Dark Jonathan Pryce
Mrs. Nightshade Diane Ladd
Dust Witch Pam Grier
Tom Fury Royal Dano
Will Halloway Vidal Peterson
Jim Nightshade Shawn Carson
Little Person #1 Angelo Rossitto
Little Person #2 Peter D. Risch
Young Ed Tony Christopher
Young Miss Foley Sharon Lea
Narrator Arthur Hill
Miss Foley Mary Grace Canfield
Mr. Crosetti Richard Davalos
Mr. Tetley Jake Dengel
Mr. Douglas Jack Dodson
Mr. Cooger Bruce M. Fischer
Mrs. Halloway Ellen Geer
Cooger as a child Brendan Klinger
Ed, the Bartender James Stacy

As depicted in Ray Bradbury's novel, Dark's Pandemonium Carnival arrives in Green Town in the dead of night, carried on a train with no engineer, pulling cars that hold no passengers. Silently, without the presence of workmen, the carnival erects itself, seemingly materializing out of mere nothingness.

Early in preproduction, director Jack Clayton and production designer Richard MacDonald decided to duck the tricky prospect of showing the carnival's fabrication. "If you show all that too early in the film, you've *shot* everything," MacDonald explained. "Instead, we concentrated on the carnival's destruction, at the end of the film."

However, when Lee Dyer took hold of the film's effects reigns in the summer of 1982, he felt the carnival's appearance was too strong a story point to ignore. Having just completed a stint as effects supervisor for TRON, Dyer reached out to Richard Taylor's MAGI filmworks in Santa Monica—responsible for the bulk of TRON's computer animation—as well as other TRON alumni, to create a two-minute animated insert that would have the proper aura of mystery and fantasy. As designed and storyboarded by Dyer, Taylor and John Norton, the sequence would have represented a new state-of-the-art for computer-generated footage, a *tour-de-force* for the skillful, seamless combination of computer and cel animation.

That is, if it had worked.

Just two weeks before the film was to open—and after months of frenzied work by a 20-man team of programmers and animators—Lee Dyer reluctantly scrapped the entire

Right: A wagon wheel rolls down a wooden ramp, then dissipates into a cloud of ectoplasm, part of an elaborate, two-minute computer animated sequence designed to show the carnival's materialization in the middle of the night. Designed and programmed by MAGI, one of the primary suppliers of TRON's high-tech graphics—the sequence was shelved at the last minute when it was deemed too far a departure, stylistically, from the rest of the film. Below: Richard Taylor, creative force behind MAGI, previews a "wire frame" version of the scene. Since it takes the computer several minutes to generate each fully-shaded high-resolution frame, MAGI's animators use these "outline" renditions to preview their work in real-time, much the same way that cel animators use pencil tests.

*Something Wicked
This Way Comes*

CREATING DARK'S CARNIVAL WITH COMPUTER ANIMATION: AN AMBITIOUS FAILURE

MAGI sequence. Not one shot had been found to be usable. Of the many changes and revisions designed to punch up the effects of SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, the MAGI footage was the only element that could not be perfected in time. However, in fairness to Richard Taylor and his colleagues, it was by far the most ambitious and daring element of the studio's \$7 million face-lift.

"After finishing TRON, Tom Wilhite [Disney's head of production] asked me to look at the work print of SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES," said Richard Taylor, recalling his start on the project. "I honestly felt the picture was in real trouble. There was nothing really mysterious or extraordinary about it."

As originally planned, the animated sequence would have depicted a strange ectoplasm emerging from the wheels of the carnival train. The green, glowing ectoplasm would, in turn, "create" the carnival's tents, amusement rides and booths. The camera would be moving through-

out the scene, gliding around the grounds and streaking into the air for high-angle views. Only two non-computer-generated shots were to be cut into the scene: a shot of the two boys running up to the carnival grounds and a shot of their stunned reaction.

"I read the book and script, then looked for motifs," Taylor said. "We didn't want to do something that was direct. We choreographed it so that you would be passing through a tent wall, spiraling over the tents and seeing them from above. It was sort of like a magician diverting your eye while shifting something to another hand."

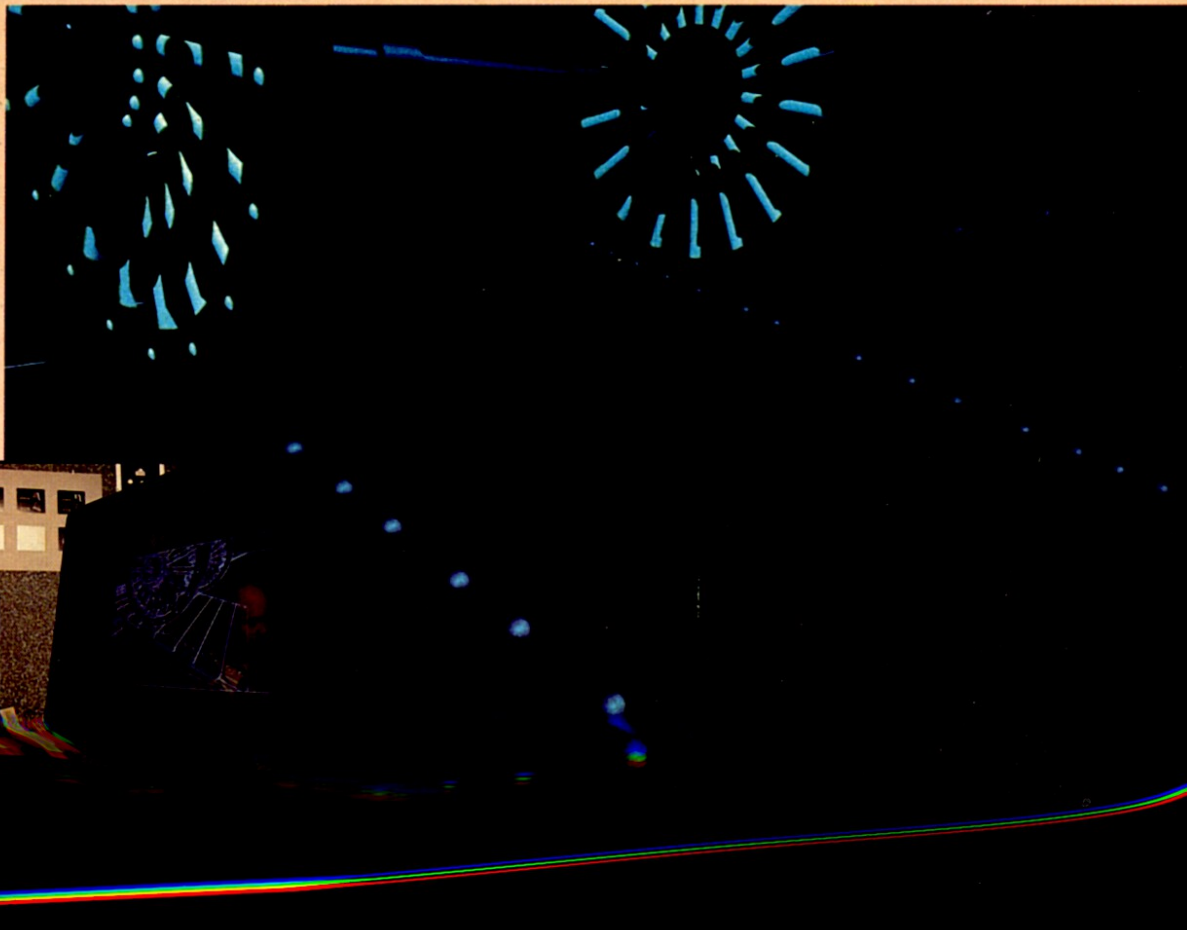
The idea was to show the natural elements of the open field—trees, spider webs, even the rolling ground itself—transforming into the key structures of the carnival: tents, a Wheel of Fortune, and the ferris wheel. Conventional cel animation would have given the sequence a cartoon-like quality. But computer animation has the capacity to create photograph-like vistas, which can be manipulated at will and photo-

graphed from every conceivable angle. The trick is telling the computer *exactly* what to do for millions of individual points within the frame.

"First, we drew blueprints for these objects, then created finished drawings that the technicians could use as guides for creating a three-dimensional data base," Taylor explained. "Then we do a 'soft model,' which simply means the coordinate numbers that define an object's shape. Once those objects are defined, we choreograph the movement of the scene and the positions of objects within the frame. Once we have this 'motion sequence,' we work out the 'key' frames and work on them as full, shaded pictures."

A primary decision is the placement and intensity of light sources. Next, the objects within the frames are colored and textured, using programming shortcuts that relieve the animators from mathematically specifying detail for every individual point on the screen. For example, computers can scan a photograph—say, of a plank of wood or a bed of gravel—and then "map" the detailing on any computer-generated object. Operators can also pre-select colors from a built-in "palette," letting the computer fill in the chosen areas. With the key frames colored and shaded in this manner, the computer can interpolate the data for all the frames in-between.

To get this image onto motion picture film, each frame is photographed in 8-perf VistaVision off a monitor that looks something like a television set, but which is able to resolve objects nearly 10 times better. For example, a standard TV picture contains 525 "scan" lines; MAGI's





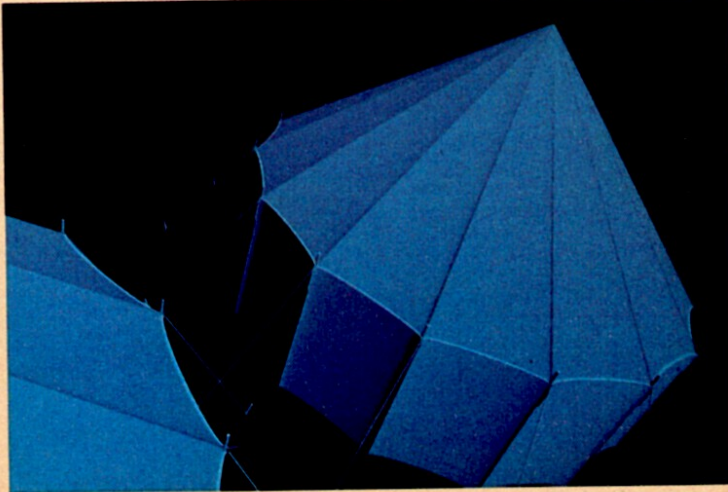
system can resolve up to 4,000 lines, which is more than enough detail for feature film quality.

Unlike *TRON*—where computers created every element for entire sequences—the effects work for *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES* was designed to incorporate organic, hand-drawn objects—like steam, sparks and ectoplasm—with in and around the computer-generated structures and background. “The animation being done is a whole generation beyond *TRON*,” boasted Lee Dyer in the early months of 1983. “There are images of ectoplasmic billows emanating from the train wheels. The ectoplasm metamorphoses into carnival tents and later wraps itself around a tree to create the ferris wheel. We’re involved with more organic images than the solid forms in *TRON*. We have to animate the ectoplasm, then feed it into the computer. The ectoplasm will have no edge, but it *will* have dimension.”

A low-resolution print was made of each scene and given to a team of 10 Disney animators, who placed clear animation cels over the frame blow-ups and drew the outline of whatever element was required. As many as three black and white line drawings were needed for each frame, indicating the total shape, the lighter areas and those in shadow.

The cels were photographed at *MAGI* on a standard animation camera. Then the footage was scanned, digitized and displayed on a high-resolution monitor over the computer-generated background. “Our electronic paint program allows us to color the different elements and blend them into the rest of the image, almost as if they were airbrushed,” Taylor explained. “There is no matting together. The computer simply fits the two pictures together—drawings and background.”

Where *TRON*’s pioneering efforts stressed high-tech, cold-surfaced images, Taylor tried to capture



another feeling for *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES*.

“Based on *TRON*, we’ve been suffering some broad generalizations about the limits of computer simulation,” he said. “We are not, by any means, confined to hard-edged, mechanical realities. This project was more difficult in some ways because the objects were familiar and the world we created had to blend in with reality. The more that audiences were aware of computer-created scenes, the less effective a job we would have done.”

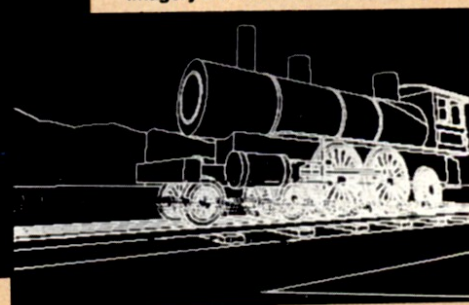
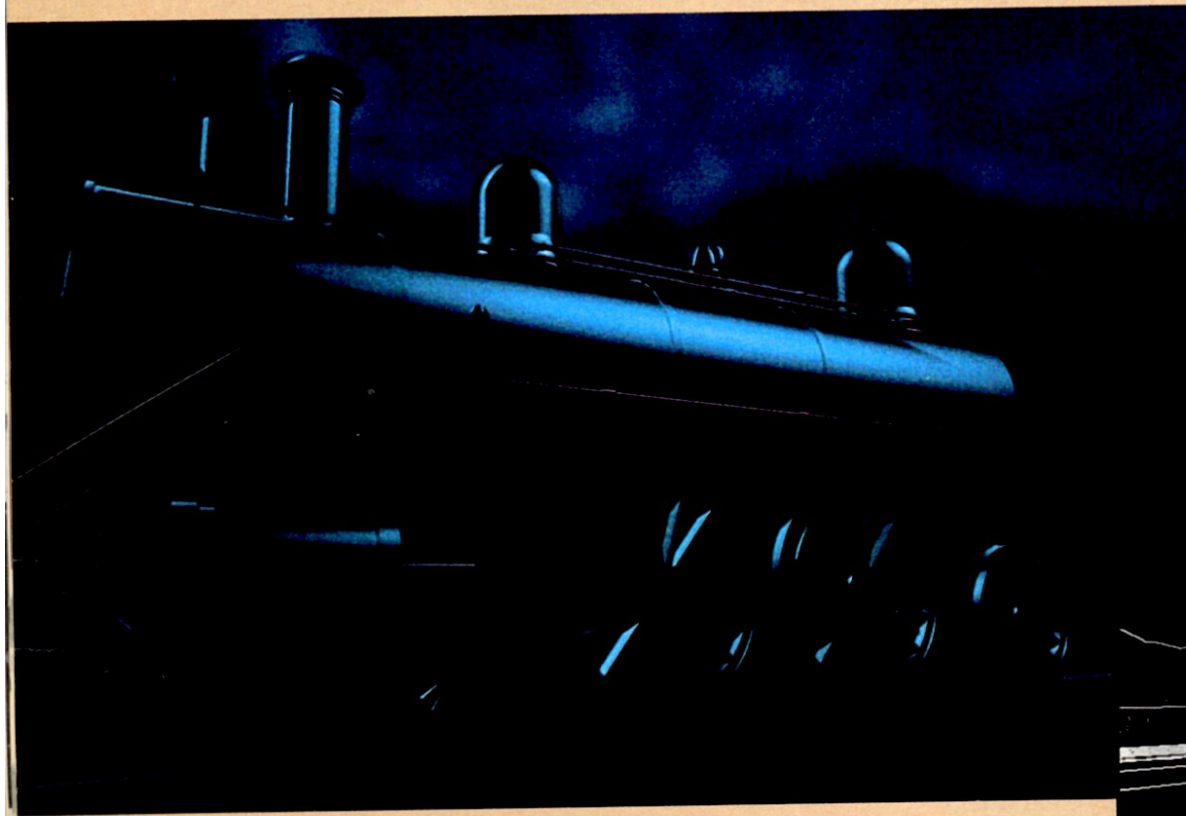
But that was just the problem: when screened for Disney brass in the spring of 1983, it was painfully obvious that the animation did not fit in with the rest of the picture. “Frankly,” Lee Dyer explained, “the footage looked sterile. There’s a certain cold blue the computer uses that is *unmistakably* computered. That worked well in *TRON* because you were immersed in that world and it *felt* right. With this film, we were

matching live action film in a period piece. It didn’t look at all organic in the way the film needed.”

Dyer felt that the “jump” from real objects—such as the railroad train hurling out of the darkness in the credit sequence—to the computer-animated replications was the giveaway. “When the computer animation came on, it was clearly not the same train the audience had seen several times before,” Dyer said. “It looked cold and dead. They have what they call a ‘futurism’ program which simply means they add three or four afterimages to soften the image. But it simply didn’t make the footage work. Another example was the camera winding up the tree in constructing the ferris wheel. The tree went into the blue tones again and had no textures, no bark. I was told they’d be programmed in. Well, it looked like an *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* tree. When we had high shots of the tents, they looked like metal sheds. A spider web looked like it was made of aluminum. Everything was geometrically perfect. There were some nice things, but on the whole, the images just didn’t tell the story in the way I wanted them to.

“For a time, we tried rationalizing

MAGI’s LOCOMOTIVE hurtles through the night, smoke billowing from its stack, an example of both the strengths and weaknesses of computer animation. While the locomotive has been captured in fine detail, and sophisticated programs have even inserted realistic-looking gravel in the road bed, the *MAGI* train simply does not match the real locomotive it was modeled after. Since a real locomotive is featured in the film’s title sequence, the *MAGI* footage stands out in stark contrast. Below: “Wire frame” tests of the train, and the rest of the two-minute sequence, convinced even skeptic Jack Clayton that computer-generated imagery would serve the film nicely.





Far Left: Close-up of the locomotive's wheels with smoke billowing backwards, a combination of hand-drawn cel animation (smoke) incorporated within MAGI's computer-generated environment. Center: High-angle view of the carnival's tents. Effects supervisor Lee Dyer complained the tint and texture of the tents made them look like metal sheds. Above: the Wheel of Fortune forms from spider webs (note silhouette of spider). By mathematically defining each of the elements within the scene, the computer can combine and manipulate objects with ease, displaying the image from any vantage point and under any chosen lighting. However, current state-of-the-art is still unable to intercut with more naturalistic footage.

the footage by thinking, 'Well, we're seeing this from the point of view of the two boys. This is how they're thinking and seeing.' But it just didn't match," Dyer added. "MAGI just wasn't able to deliver in time. I think if they'd had another four months or so to work on it, they might have gotten it. As it was, they'd recomputed scenes three times for me. Either it would come out with the same 'glitch,' or else something new was wrong. And you simply can't recompute footage that quickly.

"I know the computer will eventually do what we want it to," Dyer added. "It's just not *there* yet—not the way we wanted to apply it."

Once again, Dyer was forced to conjure up a magical filmic "plug" for an ailing sequence. The difference was that *this* time, repairs had to be made on one of his own brainstorms.

"Fortunately, we'd shot footage of the miniature carnival with the tiny lights on before we destroyed it for the finale," Dyer explained. "The way you see it in the film now, the boys run down the railroad tracks and over the hill. They get into position, there's a lightning flash and we cut to the top of the ferris wheel. That starts turning and the camera slowly pans down past a sign for Dark's Pandemonium Carnival. It's all in miniature, but it has a nice, magical ambience. Then the camera trucks back through a matte painting. If you didn't know what was originally planned for that sequence, you'd never missed it. But it could have been a *great* sequence."

Although numerous calls were made to Richard Taylor to obtain his views on the decision to discard his footage, he could not be reached for comment. One possible reason has to do with the touchy financial situation that exists between Disney and MAGI. Although no one at Disney would go on record, more than one source suggested that MAGI would have to bear the entire cost of the development and actualization of the carnival materialization sequence. By conservative estimates, that figure could easily rise to a million dollars or more.

Since hindsight is invariably 20-20, Dyer regretted not having han-

dling the sequence through more conventional techniques. "Frankly, we *should* have used miniatures and a combination of animation techniques," he mused. "Four or five months back, there would have been no problem with that. Those tents could have risen right out of the ground. But there just wasn't any time left to go back and do it again."

Despite the belly-up of the great technical hope embodied by computer animation—and the lukewarm box office response to the wonders of TRON—Dyer insisted the experience wouldn't hobble the studio's future link-up with the process. "The hope was the computer could do for SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES what it did on TRON—which was *incredible*," he explained. "I hoped that they'd come far enough with the computer to pull it off, but it didn't happen. But we're still gearing up for THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER [see story, page 14], which will be in 70mm and *totally* computer animated. I've seen tests that already look terrific. I'm confident they'll be able to pull it off.

"At this point," Dyer added, "the problem is putting computer animation with live action, where your eye *knows* what is and isn't believable. With SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, it boiled down to the question: 'Do we hurt this film and use the footage, or not?' I didn't feel we should rip the audience off." □

wire. The same thing happened when I was casting the two children for THE INNOCENTS. I guess part of me must like working that way."

Only one problem remained: Peterson was dark haired and Carson was blond, yet one of the key metaphors of the novel required that *Will* be fair-haired, and *Jim* be darker. The solution: a dye job for both kids, touched up periodically during filming.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES began filming on September 29, 1981. Life on the set revolved around Jack Clayton, a methodical, deliberate director who presided with an air of calm and immense patience. Though his temper is legend, Clayton rarely raised his voice, preferring to give suggestions to the actors—particularly his two child stars—in private, away from the stage.

"Clayton knew what he wanted, and stuck to what was there on the page," observed Jason Robards. "There was no shooting of mistakes or ad libs and no great analysis or discussion—at least as far as Jonathan Pryce and I were concerned. I think there was a lot more talk and attention given to the two boys. It's hard stuff working with kids. Clayton had to spend a *whole* lot of time with them."

In fact, Clayton emerged as something of a father figure for the two youthful actors, who took to calling him "Dad" within a few weeks. But like any father-son relationship, Clayton was forced to reign in his charges from time to time. "The children in THE INNOCENTS, Martin Stephens and Pamela Franklin, were extremely polite and somewhat awed by Deborah Kerr," Clayton recalled. "However, on *this* film, the boys got pretty cheeky and I had to slap their hands, so to speak."

To mold the teens' performances, Clayton explained precisely the action and emotions he was looking for. "To direct children, you almost have to communicate directly to their subconscious," Clayton explained. "Working with children is pure *directing*—the actor embodies ideas and motivations you've communicated. It's almost a process of imitation and mimicry."

Clayton made a difficult job even tougher by insisting that many scenes be photographed solely with long master shots, a dramatically effective device but difficult to achieve, both technically and artistically. "Jack wanted to make the performances

carry the scene without using a lot of flashy movement or technique," explained Stephen Burum. "He has a very fluid 'master scene' style of shooting which lets the actor use all of his resources. Believe me, it's a lot easier to make certain things work through the cutting. But it's in bringing out the dynamics of the scene that Clayton really excels."

Burum was particularly impressed by a long, difficult take involving Robards and Vidal Peterson. A static scene set on a staircase, Clayton let the emotional interplay dominate the action. "The camera simply stayed on both of them while they talked," Burum recalled. "Another director might have covered himself by using a lot of cuts and close-ups. But Clayton prefers making himself, and his actors, work. That takes guts."

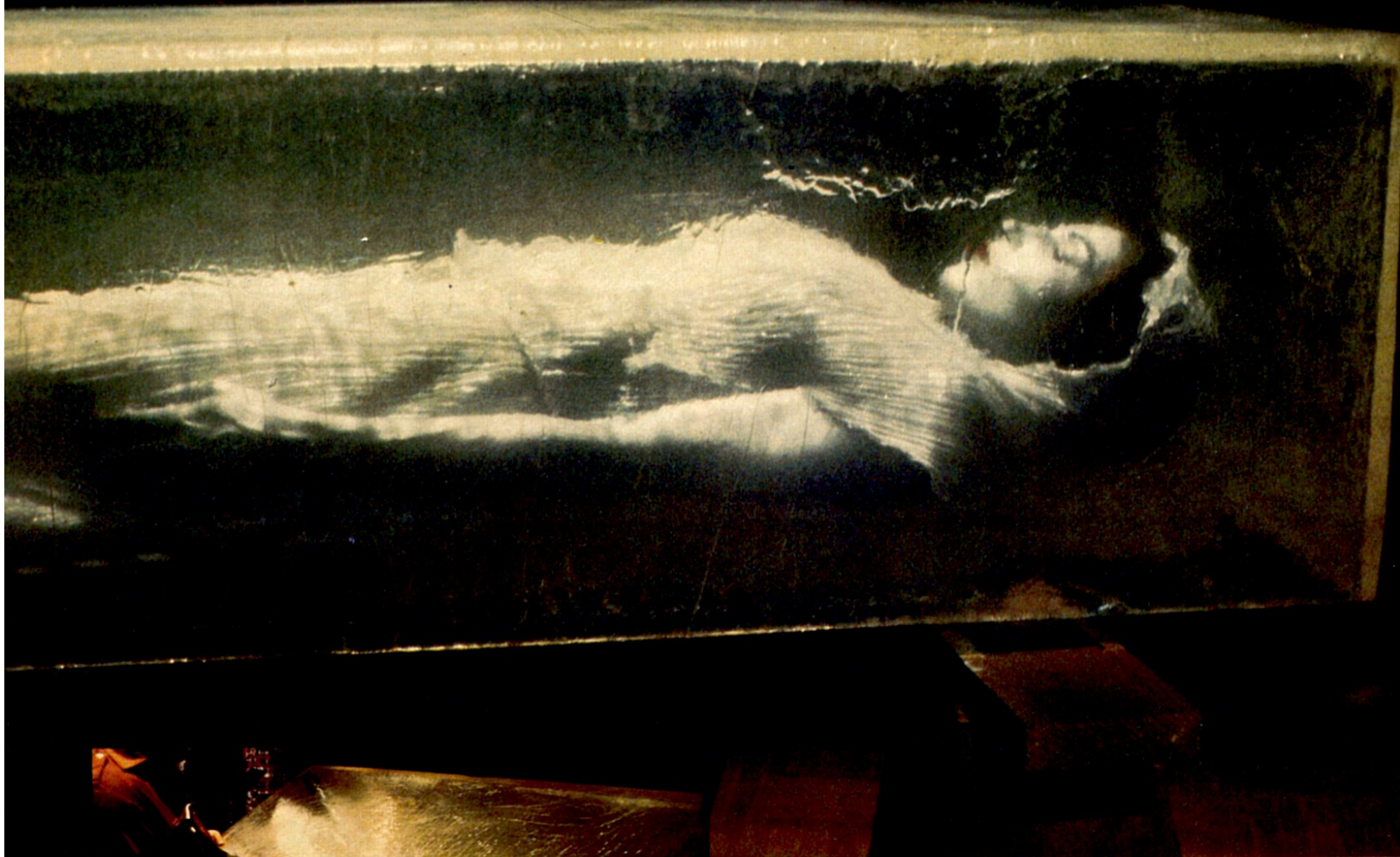
Clayton clearly enjoys the challenge—he worked on the film with the intensity of a man obsessed. Watching his extraordinary concentration on detail, balanced by his constant availability to cast and crew, gave weight to the director's admission that filmmaking is his greatest pleasure. "When I am working on a film," he once confessed, "I do not exist, other than on film. I *have* no private life."

Part of Clayton's monomania has to do with his resistance to unconsciously imitating the work of others. "I can remember waking up in the middle of the night during the shooting of a number of my films," he said, "and realizing that the shot I'd just done that day I'd stored up in my mind from another of my films. The next day, I'd have to reshoot it. I love a lot of other director's work, but I hate copying it in *any* way."

Although filming progressed steadily, with the project on time and within budget, major troubles were brewing in Green Town. Friction rapidly developed between several of the key members of Clayton's production crew, particularly production designer Richard MacDonald and cinematographer Stephen Burum.

Right: Dick Davalos as "Madame" Crosetti, the bearded lady. Crosetti had been Green Town's barber (below) until he was corrupted by the carnival.





THE DUST WITCH (Pam Grier) is first glimpsed as a beautiful woman mysteriously embedded within a huge block of ice (top). Above: Effects technician Pat Domenico helps Grier into the polyurethane shell of the ice block. Below: Will and Jim are trapped in the town's library by the Dust Witch and Mr. Dark. The spray of dust was channeled through thin plastic tubes taped to Grier's hand, and was controlled by a technician who can be seen, barely, kneeling in the background.



"I could have helped them out a good deal technically had I been on the film earlier," said Burum, who was hired after many of the sets had already been designed and built. "It might have saved a lot of time later on when we had to chainsaw and patch our way out of things. Comes the day of shooting, you'll see a set for the first time and say, 'Oh, but they had to be shot going through *that* door.' Then, things have to be fixed in the middle of the night."

Although neither would go on record about it, many sources close to the production called the Burum-MacDonald *contretemps* a classic case of *Irresistible Force vs. Immovable Object*. MacDonald reportedly seethed over Burum's lighting and choice of angles in shooting the much-vaunted sets. And Burum railed about the structural difficulties inherent in MacDonald's Green Town environs. As one studio wag put it: "Burum and MacDonald were at each other's throats almost from Day One. Clayton focused on the performance and tried to be diplomatic. Nobody actually won."

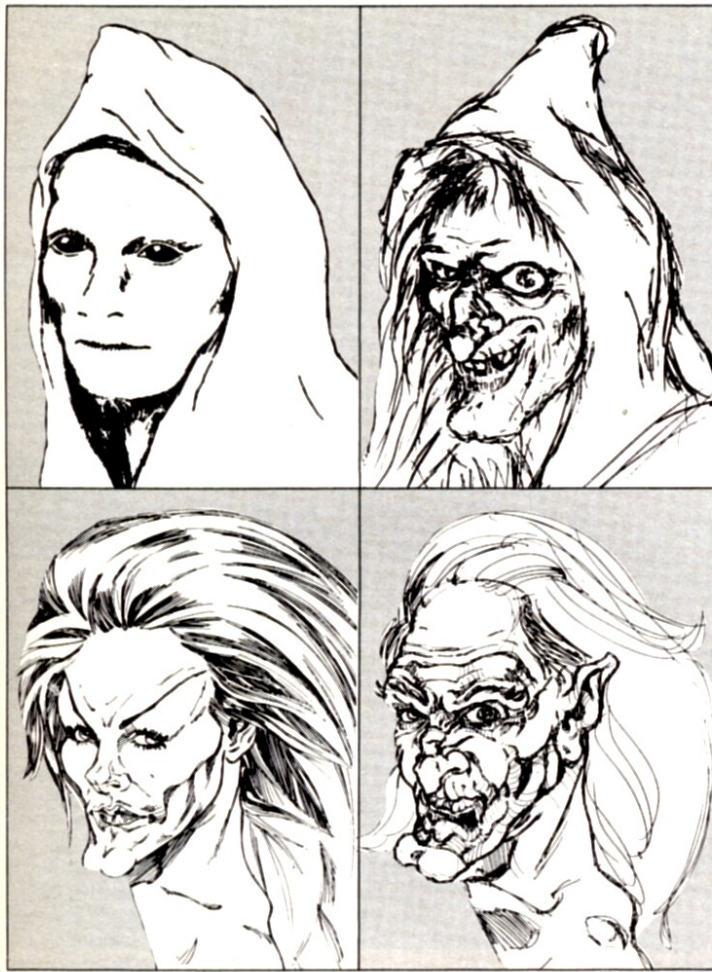
Clayton, to his credit, did his best to keep both sides happy. "On most of my films, the cameraman and art director are often at loggerheads," he explained. "MacDonald built sets to *last*. For the library scenes, for instance, one of the reasons it looks and sounds so real is because it was built out of cast iron. Perhaps one of the problems came because of the confrontation between Halloway and Mr. Dark, which takes place in that

library. The whole of the scene was to be done in two long master shots, which was a very difficult way to do it technically. The way I set the scene up meant that one pillar of the library had to be removed, which took about half a day to do. Burum has no right criticizing MacDonald for building the set that way. He should criticize me for wanting to *shoot* it that way."

While Steve Burum and Richard MacDonald were battling each other, many of the other key technical personnel weren't getting along much better. Makeup effects supervisor Robert J. Schiffer found himself battling both Burum and MacDonald at various times, not to mention director Jack Clayton, producer Peter Douglas and the film's mechanical effects staff.

A salty, dashing Englishman who has headed Disney's makeup department since 1969, Schiffer's career has included everything from *THE WIZARD OF OZ*, to preening glamour girls, to being ousted from *LADY FROM SHANGHAI* by director Orson Welles.

"Jack Clayton is a talented man, but he's not the kind you can dictate to," said Schiffer, whose responsibilities included the eerie Dust Witch, a severed head, several dozen misshapen freaks, Jason Robards' sudden aging, and the climactic crumbling away of Mr. Dark while he's trapped on the carousel. "We got off to a bad start because I came in with a lot of ideas about how the effects



CONCEPT SKETCHES by the dozen were created by makeup supervisor Robert Schiffer for a brief cut of the Dust Witch's horrific features. Schiffer's favorite design featured empty black eyes and a blank face (top left). Others included a typical "Disney" witch (top right), a "beautiful" witch (lower left), and a witch with the face of a "walnut" (lower right) as requested by production designer Richard MacDonald. None of the designs satisfied director Jack Clayton, who ultimately opted to use postproduction animation effects (see page 47).



"I got off to a bad start with Jack Clayton. I learned you simply suggest things to him. Maybe in a week, he'll come around. Maybe not."

**MAKEUP SUPERVISOR
ROBERT J. SCHIFFER**

should be approached. For the scene in which Dark is shown disintegrating, I had detailed storyboards all formulated. *Not* a good idea. I learned you simply *suggest* things to Clayton. Maybe in a week or so, he'll come around. Maybe not."

An early problem involved the conception of the Dust Witch, a problematic role which had already caused Clayton major casting problems. "I went through literally dozens of concepts for the Dust Witch," Schiffer said. "I wanted to go with a concept that featured black scleral lenses and a featureless face. That was Clayton's least favorite. Everyone had a different concept. Richard MacDonald insisted I come up with a face that looked exactly like a big walnut. Fortunately, once he saw it, he hated it as much as I did."

Not only were the creative indecisions frustrating for Schiffer, they were costly as well. "I bought a wig for the Dust Witch that cost \$3,400," Schiffer said. "It was specially made of human hair, and extended down to the waist. I wanted to have a shot that could exploit this long, flowing hair—blowing in the wind. I thought the expense was worth it. But when it came time to do the scene, they never showed the hair."

Also axed from the film were a number of heads showing Jason Robards in an advanced stage of old age, built for the troubled *Mirror Maze* sequence. "They were going to shoot 20 images of Robards in the mirrors, while Jonathan Pryce taunts him by saying, 'See yourself at 60, 70,

80.' Somehow, they weren't able to get the images, although they were done in *LADY FROM SHANGHAI* more than 30 years ago," Schiffer said. "Then they decided to surround Robards with 20 old men, *real* old men. I told them it'd look lousy having Jason in makeup with real old men around him. They went to the Jewish Home for the Aged and got a nice, clean bunch of men. Of course, they didn't look old or crappy enough. I told them to go to Skid Row and get some authentic winos, but they didn't."

Also axed was one of the film's most powerful makeup effects—Mr. Dark crushing Jason Robards' hand in a spurt of blood and bone. The problem this time was that the effect worked *too* well. "This is still the Disney studio, where a number of people are *MARY POPPINS*-oriented," sighed Schiffer. "I think some of the execs thought my stuff was just too gory." In fact, the Disney honchos weren't the only who flinched at a few of Schiffer's effects; it was the gasps of preview audiences probably cemented the broken hand's fate.

The effect involved a prop arm made from an alginate mold of Jason Robards' hand, wrist and forearm. Schiffer made a thin, foam latex skin with individually punched hairs to give a natural look. The mechanics were designed and built by Jack Sampson, who used a series of control rods and wedges to push the "bone" (actually dental material) through a pre-cut section of skin. For the six

takes called for by Jack Clayton, the bone was simply pushed down, the arm was cleaned off, and Schiffer hid the opening with a dab of mortician's wax and makeup.

"When I saw the scene in the dailies, I applauded," Schiffer recalled. "But Ron Miller was standing behind me and he groaned."

Ultimately, Tom Wilhite delivered the kabosh: "I think it's synonymous with the baby dragon chewing off the dead woman's flesh in *DRAGONSLAYER* [a Disney co-production]. The bone-popping isn't consistent with the tone of the rest of the film. Philosophically, the moment makes sense as a concrete example of Dark's power and malevolence. On a visceral level, though, it's a turn-off. I'm all for showing the skin cracking, then letting sound effects do the rest."

Of the various effects required, Schiffer claimed most pride in the Dark disintegration, accomplished by a smooth transition from actor Jonathan Pryce's face to four distinct stages of puppet head. "The truth is, I would have loved to have directed the whole sequence myself," Schiffer said. "My concept was to use the carousel horses strongly, to show them pummeling with their hooves beating down on Mr. Dark. I designed a rolling eye for one of the horses to look down weirdly. I was going to have steam coming from the horses' nostrils. In addition, I wanted to heat a mixture of alginate and clay that was spread over the skull, and using a stop-motion camera, let the alginate shrink off. It would have been an amazing effect, but I was dealing with a director who is, to say the least, opinionated."

Schiffer had to curb his directorial aspirations once Clayton's deafening silence to his suggestions gave him the strong impression he was being told to tend to his own knitting. But he still did what he could to insure Dark's demise would be a career and film highpoint ("While I was making the heads, I kept hoping for an Oscar nomination," he said).

Work on the sequence began by designing an appliance makeup for Pryce to wear to represent the first stage of the aging process. Since Pryce wore a beard throughout the film, Schiffer had to fit the appliances over the beard then apply a false white beard over that. From there, a transition would be made to the sequence of four articulated puppet heads that would graphically illustrate the aging and disintegration. Designed with an open mouth to suggest Mr. Dark's curdling scream, the heads were built in consultation with Stan

Winston, a former apprentice to Schiffer who has since handled makeup effects on *DEAD AND BURIED*, *HEARTBEEPS* and *THE ENTITY*.

Although Winston is particularly adept at mechanics and puppet heads, and a natural choice for such an assignment, his hiring drew unexpected resistance from producer Peter Douglas. "I told Douglas that I didn't have enough room for all the work at the studio," Schiffer recalled. "Douglas says, 'I don't care who you use, but *don't* use Stan Winston.' Then the production manager tells me the same thing. They'd both had bad experiences with him. Well, Winston is the nicest guy in the world and I wanted to work with him, so I kept the whole thing a secret. I don't care now, because if the disintegration scenes are successful, that should reflect on both of us."

Winston, who worked under Schiffer from 1969 to 1972, traced the bad blood with Peter Douglas to a short stint on *THE FINAL COUNTDOWN*, Douglas' first film as producer. "I hate admitting this publicly, but the work I did on *THE FINAL COUNTDOWN* was not my best," Winston mused. "None of the circumstances about why that means anything. The fact was, my work wasn't useable."

"Schiffer told me what the tone of Douglas' comments were, but he also placed having the job done well *above* certain mandates," added Winston, who set up a dummy company, Studio Effects, to satisfy the demands of Douglas and the Disney brass. Both Winston and Schiffer doubt anyone ever knew the difference.

Of course, Winston couldn't go near the Disney lot or watch the dailies, so Schiffer made frequent trips to Winston's studio to fill him in on how things were going and to collaborate on the work. Their main challenge was trying to show the disintegration of a *normal*-looking person, instead of a the monstrous change-o mechanisms now used commonly. A conventional approach—used by



"We recommended using miniatures to destroy the carnival in an exciting way. But what do we know, right? All we know how to do is roll up hoses."

**EFFECTS TECHNICIAN
PAT DOMENICO**

Dick Smith on David Bowie's makeup for *THE HUNGER*—would approximate the aging by the use of detailed foam latex appliances. However, it was Winston's suggestion to go with puppet heads, which allow a makeup artist to *remove* flesh from the face as easily as latex appliances allow you to *add* features and flesh.

"I suggested doing what *really* happens with age," Winston explained, "a sinking, a sucking of the flesh to the bone. The technology itself was not new. It was the artwork and the detailing that made these heads special."

To sculpt the proper expressions onto the puppet heads, Schiffer applied the first stage of appliances to Pryce—including latex cheeks, eye bags and distortions of the nose and forehead—then had him photographed screaming and grimacing. Winston and associate Jim Kagel each worked on two of the heads, using layers of paint to make the skin properly translucent and discolored, and sculpting the folds of the skin and the pained expression. The facial mechanics were worked out by Lance Anderson, who expanded on a similar head Winston built for *DEAD AND BURIED*. Schiffer was responsible for the finishing details, including the eyes, for which he added fine red thread to double as veins.

With the heads tested, painted and ready for filming, Jack Clayton surprised Schiffer by letting the makeup artist shoot his own effects. Schiffer was to work without any of the key crew members of the first unit, including Steve Burum. That was actually a benefit, according to Schiffer, who didn't get along well with the stubborn cinematographer.

"I had this small crew and we had three days to do the work," Schiffer recalled. "Then Clayton came on the set. Well, he looked and the puppet heads and saw the eyes. He'd never really come over to see the heads before this, never really believed the heads would work. He became very impressed, and suddenly I wasn't the director anymore."

Robert Schiffer wasn't the only one having his problems. Mechanical effects supervisor Alan Hall also found himself battling the bosses. And like Schiffer, Hall also saw some of his best work go down in flames.

Hired late in preproduction, Hall scrambled to assemble an experienced crew, drawing primarily from his own effects house, Movie Mechanics. A fan of the book since high school, Hall seized on the screenplay's fantastic imagery and the possibility for stylized effects. "One of the carnival tents was described as 'a breathing, pulsating snake skin,'" he said. "That was the kind of thing I went wild drawing concept after concept for. That was the film I wanted to make and see!"

But almost from the outset, Hall & Co. found their assignment a tough one. First, he and his crew were given the cold shoulder by Disney's in-house effects department, headed by veteran Danny Lee. "To put it bluntly, Lee was a creep," said Clay Pinney, one of Hall's key associates. "He wouldn't let us work out of his shop. We couldn't get co-operation on the smallest things."

A few weeks later, Lee retired and Ron Tanten took over the effects department. Immediately, life at the studio got easier. But Hall found no such quick relief in his dealings with MacDonald and Clayton, who were often a bit unsure of how to approach the book's effects. "Some art directors are very good visualizers; they know what they want," Pinney explained. "MacDonald needs to see whatever the effect is beforehand—hold it, turn it over in their hands, study it. That's okay, except even after he'd tell us what he wanted and we'd built it, there were big changes."

One of the first effects tackled involved a huge block of ice which encases a phantom shape suggesting the Dust Witch. Charles Halloway sees the vision in the window of a funeral parlor for a moment, only to discover a coffin supported by trestles when he looks back. As he had done with *THE INNOCENTS*, Clayton wanted to play with the element of doubt. But for Hall and his crew, the effect required tangible solutions,

and weeks of experimenting with materials and tints to develop an aesthetically pleasing, self-supporting, transparent shell.

The solution involved a huge mold and a polyurethane mix used for skateboard wheels. To make the block of plastic look more like a block of ice, Hall frosted the corners with flocking, crushed mothballs and glue to eliminate an odd prismatic reflection, and liquid nitrogen was run through copper tubing along the bottom edge of the block, making it look as though the ice was blowing off cold fumes. Hall's assessment: "It looked very good."

But when the prop was brought to the set, the ice chips hit the fan. "I remember that night of shooting *very* well," Hall said. "MacDonald and Burum were in the middle of some disagreement when we showed up. MacDonald took a look at the frosting and asked, 'What's this white stuff?' I explained, but he told me to take it off. He also had us remove the copper tubing. After they made me do that, I walked away. And all through this, MacDonald was having his say on how the cube should be lit. Then Burum had his shot at how it should be lit. It was a big deal."

The effects team next geared up for a major sequence involving the pursuit of the two boys by a gigantic, claw-like hand—obviously that of the Dust Witch—that was to scrape at their windows and leave a trail of dust and snail goo across the roof. "It was a great challenge and a labor of love," Hall said. "Here was our chance to really shine."

Hall and his co-workers spent six weeks building a series of mechanical arm and hand puppets, the largest of which measured eight feet from the "shoulder" to the fingertips. The hands were designed to move and pivot naturally, with a steel and plastic armature approximating the bones and joints found in a human hand. When the arm was brought to the stage for shooting, even the effects-wary Clayton appeared impressed. "He kept asking what it could do," recalled effects technician Pat Domenico. "He seemed to like it so much, he started inventing new business for it. Instead of just show-

ing the hand scratching at the window, he has us banging and grabbing at it. Everyone seemed to love it."

Hall was hoping that he and his team had marked some turnaround in their relationship with the powers-that-be. But just three days after the successful shooting of the giant hand, he was told by Clayton that the effect had been scrapped because it was "too literal."

"I couldn't understand it," said Hall, still somewhat incredulous. "I think people who are into science fiction *want* to see that kind of representation of evil. I *told* Clayton that. But the next day he'd decided that they were going to animate a mysterious cloud and leave it at that."

Ultimately, a horde of spiders—both real and mechanical—were used in place of the giant claw. But that was months in the future. In the meantime, they were busy struggling to get *their* interpretation of the Bradbury book past Clayton and MacDonald and onto the screen. It was a frustrating battle.

A typical case involved a scene set in the carnival's Mirror Maze—the breakthrough in the tension-filled relationship between Charles Halloway and his son. As the pair struggle hopelessly to reach each other in the dizzying maze, Will cries out, "I love you." At that moment, the mirrors suddenly shatter.

"The things we'd planned were unbelievable," Hall said. "As the mirrors begin to shatter and explode, we wanted to put the camera behind protective glass and drop sequins, lighted glass and other reflecting objects down from 70 feet up. We were going to overlay fleeting images of the carousel horses and mutated freaks shattering in the mirrors. They kept telling us they felt the scene had to have more and *more*. But when they shot it, it was always less and *less*."

The film's climax—the destruction of Dark's Carnival by a huge storm—was another major sequence which Hall felt could have, and should have, been handled better. For starters, Hall was told the scene had to be shot *inside*, on a soundstage, though the carnival had been built outdoors on the Disney Ranch. "We strongly recommended either shooting it on the Ranch or using miniatures, so that we could *really* destroy the place in an exciting way," Domenico explained. "But what do we know, right? All we know how to do is roll up hoses."

Hall's only solution was to rig virtually every booth, false front and tent through a system of counterweights and "flying" mechanisms. "We did everything we could to rig the heck out of that stage, because I never felt the destruction would be dramatic enough," Hall said. "We made a retractable spike at the top of a tent; at the push of a button, the tent would go limp and billow strangely. And we rigged it so the tents would twist and weave as they flew across the stage."

Since the scene required a torrential rain storm, the soundstage was rigged accordingly, a tremendous expense by itself. But when it came time to film the sequence, Steve Burum hung a series of expensive "coffin lights"—big boxes about 20

Director Jack Clayton walks Pam Grier, Vidal Peterson and Jason Robards' stand-in, Norm Mont Eton, through a scene set in the Mirror Maze. Due to technical and artistic flaws, much of this sequence had to be reshot during postproduction.





Right: Pam Grier as the Dust Witch reveals herself to lightning rod salesman Tom Fury in the freak tent. The coating of ice that appears to cascade off her body was created entirely in postproduction with rotoscope animation. In Jack Clayton's original cut of the film, the Dust Witch was shown simply standing in the tent wearing a wedding dress. For the revised version ultimately released, the ice-like coating is shown shattering, and the background of the room was darkened to focus attention on the Dust Witch. Above: Animator Scott Santoro works from large-format frame blow-ups to plan out the animation effects.



feet wide and six feet deep with black cloth around the edges and a thin diffusion layer at the bottom—high up in the rafters, blocking out part of the area Hall and his team needed for the storm and the rigging. "It became a big fight whether the lights or the effects were more important," Hall sighed. "We lost."

Even seemingly simple assignments were a cause of grief. One such shot involved a rain of dust magically pouring forth from the fingertips of the Dust Witch while she was in full view of the camera. After a few weeks of tinkering, the right material was found for the "dust" and a way to rig the effect was perfected (thin plastic tubing connected to air tanks molded to Grier's hips). But things went wrong when it came time to take the effect before the cameras.

"The effects test got relegated to the last shot of the night," explained Clay Pinney. "Everyone was tired and frustrated, and the camera crew didn't want to screw around with it. We had a tough time convincing them that it's absolutely *essential* to backlight dust effects—otherwise, you don't see *anything*."

Reportedly, when Hall and his crew did their *own* tests, the dust was visible 30 feet away. But with *Burum* in charge, the effect just didn't work. "I've worked with him on other projects," said effects man Bob Willard. "He's a good man, but he doesn't take direction at all. You say, 'Steve, it's *designed* so the lighting has to go this way.' Eventually, he may come around, but it could take forever."

Hall's conflicts with Burum, Mac-

Donald and/or Clayton ultimately stretched to include nearly every effects scene in the picture. According to Hall, his effects were either lit poorly, designed without enough "punch," or simply ruined, compromised and made more expensive by needless meddling.

Which is not to say that Clayton, MacDonald, et al, were thrilled with Hall. They weren't. As principal photography ended in December, 1981, rumbles were emanating loud and long that the effects were simply unacceptable. "When I agreed to make the film, I told Disney I had never made a special effects film,"

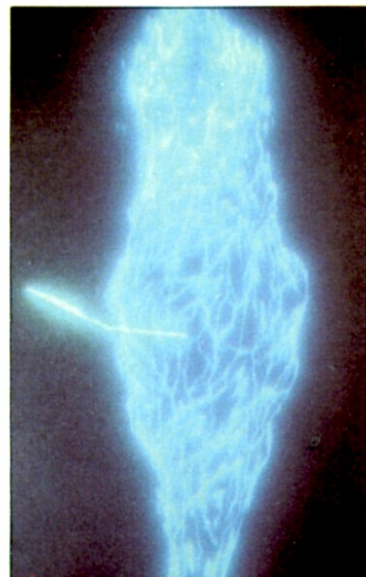
said Clayton, who has vowed never to make *another* effects film. "I asked for the best crew that they had. Instead, I was given the *third* best crew. The majority of the good people were working on *TRON*, the second best were on the EPCOT project, and we were the poor little orphans.

"The Mirror Maze sequence was appalling; we had to do it again," he added. "The carnival disintegration was no good, either. When Tom Fury [a lightning rod salesman, played by Royal Dano] is strapped into the electric chair and lightning bolts are slashing all around him, I expected one thing and got another. The list

went on and on. But I was involved in shooting and didn't have time to do anything about it."

It became clear that *no one* was satisfied with the completed effects. But at the time, there didn't seem to be anything to do about it, except point an accusative finger. And so everyone did. Producer Peter Douglas complained that the effects budget had been inadequate. Tom Wilhite placed some of the blame back on the concepts and expectations of Clayton and MacDonald. And what about Alan Hall? He acknowledged—as he had through the production—that the effects were not all they could have

The Dust Witch is impaled by one of Tom Fury's lightning rods—setting off an electrical charge that ultimately whisks her away out of frame—one of nearly 200 optical effects added to the film under the direction of effects supervisor Lee Dyer.



investment, shelving the film was hardly practical. Instead, the project would receive a complete overhaul: major re-editing, a new score, beefed-up effects sequences, new scenes involving the principal actors, and Bradbury-esque narration to help clarify the storyline. The price tag? A cool \$7 million by the time it was all over. The verdict hit Clayton hard.

"I have stacks of memos from Wilhite and Miller saying how wonderful they thought the film was," said Clayton bitterly. "The audience response cards were just average, but I can only say that they didn't get the right audience or theater. I don't believe in market research because they only go for a common denominator. The cards don't give an idea of what the audience really thinks."

Clayton has generally fought to retain the final cut of his films. It was clear, however, that the studio wasn't about to indulge him this time. He watched helplessly as studio doctors began a year-long operation on his film: patching, repairing and reworking. "I can't comment at any length about it," Clayton huffed, "but let's put it this way—I will never make another film for Disney!"

The surgery team was headed up by effects specialist Lee Dyer, who was first consulted a few months before the disastrous preview. Considered by some to be one of the unsung heroes on the technical wonders of TRON, Dyer began his career as an effects animator with 101 DALMATIANS and stayed on through MARY POPPINS. Deserting the fold for 10 years (he freelanced on such projects as HEAVY METAL), he returned to help orchestrate TRON's effects.

"About two months before TRON ended, Tom Wilhite told me he wanted me to work on SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES next," Dyer recalled. "I'd rather not get into the specifics, but let's just say that when I was brought on, I thought the picture lacked fantasy and magic. There were certain visual concepts and story areas which really needed further development."

Dyer's recommendations had to do as much with the theme and structure of the film as with the special effects themselves. What he proposed to Wilhite was nothing less drastic than remaking the film from the ground up. "We knew major changes were going to have to be made," Dyer recalled. "Jack Clayton was very upset. Even after the preview, he didn't realize we were going into that much of an overhaul on the film, outside of the effects. It was touchy. I wanted to try and make this a very entertaining film. I was trying to please Ray Bradbury—he would send three- and four-page memos all the time, talking about what the picture lacked. At the same time, Peter Douglas was doing the same thing. All of this advice and input was coming in full-tilt. Finally, I had to block a lot of it out."

"The process boiled down to my coming up with a range of ideas, bringing them into discussions with Clayton and others, and settling on those Jack really liked," Dyer added. "Knowing Jack Clayton as I do now,

I'm sure the initial shock about all of the changes was great."

One of the first changes involved dispatching a second-unit crew—under Dyer's direction—to Vermont during the peak of the fall foliage season to capture a sense of authentic time and place. Costumed residents were filmed in specific locations which would marry with studio-shot footage. "We made a long series of shots of the two boys running, as well as reaction shots," Dyer explained. "We also reshot the arrival into town of the lightning rod salesman, Tom Fury. The idea was to give a sense of geography to elements of the film that count in the story—the graveyard, the boys' houses, and the carnival in relation to the town—and to show people actually living and working in Green Town. In all the shots, we did slight dollies with the camera. We wanted to enhance the mood by giving it a sense of drift and flow."

Another of Dyer's embellishments was to frame the film as a reminiscence, via off-screen narration. "It's as though the character of Will Hallowsay as a grown man is remembering the year Halloween came early to his boyhood town," Dyer explained. Both Clayton and Bradbury had reservations about the alteration, although Clayton admitted early screenplay drafts had utilized the structural device.

But by far the most invasive of the changes involved the near-complete reconceptualization of the film's horror and fantasy elements, previously the province of effects man Alan Hall and makeup artist Robert Schiffer. Despite the radical nature of the changes, Dyer insisted his suggestions were organic to Bradbury's original screenplay and complementary to the staid, quiet fire of Clayton's first cut. "We came up with four sequences for the film and storyboarded each," Dyer explained. "In every one of them, there was never the idea of loading on effects cosmetically. We tried making story points out of everything we did, and tried tying the loose threads together."

Clayton had never worked with storyboards before, but he worked

closely with Dyer to develop the individual shots for the major new effects scenes: the eerie materialization of the carnival in an empty meadow, a two-minute sequence that was designed to be completely computer animated (see sidebar, page 35); the attack on Will and Jim by a horde of giant spiders; the highly-charged emotional breakthrough between Will and his father in the Mirror Maze; and the annihilation of Dark's carnival by an other-worldly storm.

In addition, Dyer and a team of artists and animators sprinkled a variety of effects throughout the film, from the opening matte painting of Tom Fury walking down the road to Green Town, to the rumbling clouds that signify the force of goodness, to the glowing green ectoplasm that follows Will and Jim through the woods. Where Jack Clayton had planned to use as few "flashy tricks" as he could get away with, Dyer & Co. ultimately added nearly 200 different optical effects in postproduction.

Much of the effects work involved simply sprucing up pre-existing footage with rotoscope animation, such as the pages of the diary glowing as Mr. Dark rips them out in his confrontation with Charles Halloway in the library, and the lightning bolts that pin Mr. Dark down on the whirling carousel.

But other changes required that the principal actors be called back for entirely new scenes. Such was the case with the Mirror Maze, one of the most difficult sequences for Dyer on a conceptual level. In Clayton's original cut, Mr. Dark torments Robards with visions of his aging and death, a sequence that featured 20 real old men dressed to look like Robards. But Dyer felt the scene would work better if it also resolved the tension in the guilt-ridden relationship between Will and his father.

"We had to bring back Jason Robards, Pam Grier, Royal Dano and the two kids," Dyer explained. "We had the maze completely reconstructed on the lot, using 30 mirrored surfaces and smoke effects. In the first cut of the film, Will was caught in the freak tent. Now, Will's father is lured into the maze by a voice-over of Will



"The preview cards were just average, or below. There was no magic to the picture. Things that worked fine on paper just didn't work on film."

**HEAD OF PRODUCTION
TOM WILHITE**

calling for help. We brought back Jonathan Pryce to do voice-overs taunting Halloway about the incident where he couldn't swim to save his son. For the shot where Halloway begins reliving his son's near-drowning, we shot new footage on location and in the studio tank."

The film's ending—the carnival being swept away by a huge funnel cloud—was also comprised of almost entirely new footage. One of the key ingredients to the sequence is the storm itself, the product of Disney's massive new \$100,000 cloud tank, which operates on the same principle as the tanks used to create clouds for CLOSE ENCOUNTERS and RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, but on a more massive scale.

"We made the skies a stronger element because the approaching storm that wipes out the carnival was also made stronger," Dyer explained. "The first carnival destruction shots didn't show destruction, so much as confusion. So we tried sharpening the feeling of Dark's absolute force of evil coming up against the 'God

Left: Filming the tarantula attack on Will and Jim. Doree Sitterly and Cardon Walker (r) use bursts of cold air to persuade the spiders to move. Prop spiders at the end of sticks (lower left) were also used. Right: Isodoro Raponi holds one of his 200 fake spiders, used to augment a like number of real insects. Raponi also built nine life-sized mechanical models for close-ups.



lighthouse and a dinosaur.

"Actually, they tried stealing the story from me, though I don't think it was outright plagiarism. Harryhausen asked the producer to call me to look at the script. I can't remember what they were calling it at the time. I went into a room at the studio and read it very quickly. When I came out, they asked me whether I was interested. I told them 'Maybe,' and mentioned that the script was very similar to a story of mine which had appeared in *The Post* under the title 'The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms.' A look came into the producer's eyes; it suddenly hit him that—inadvertently or not—the story had been lifted from mine.

A few days later, I got a telegram from the studio asking if they could buy the rights to the story. It turned out peaceably, so I'd like to believe the plagiarism was inadvertent."



IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE

Directed by Jack Arnold. Screenplay by Harry Essex, based on Bradbury's screen treatment, *The Meteor*. Universal, 1953. 80 mins. In b&w and 3-D. With: Richard Carlson, Barbara Rush, Charles Drake.

"The producers told me they wanted monsters and meteors. Actually, they didn't know quite what they wanted, except to scare people. I told them I'd come in on a limited basis—say, four to six weeks—give them an outline, and we'd see how it went from there.

"After a few weeks, I realized they wanted something very shlocky and silly. I went to them and said, 'In order to make everyone happy, I'll do two versions of the story. One with your ideas which I don't like, but I'll try and do them as honestly as I can. I'll also do a version for me. If you go my way, I'll stay on and do the script. If you insist on going your way, I'll have to quit because I can't work on something I don't believe in.' They thought I was crazy.

"A day or two after they'd read both outlines, they called me and said, 'O.K., let's do it your way.' So I won my little fight without fighting. I did a treatment for them which was ridiculously long and detailed—easily 80 or 90 pages. I essentially gave them a whole screenplay for around \$2,000. Then they got rid of me and brought on Harry Essex as screenwriter. But that's OK. I was a young person and still had to learn the ropes.

"The final film isn't great, but it has some nice moments that remain intact from my treatment. My greatest reward from the film came the morning after I saw *CE3K*. I called Steven Spielberg and told him I'd just written a review of the film for the *Los Angeles Times*. He invited me over and I gave him a big hug. He said, 'If

it hadn't been for *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE*, I never would have done *CE3K*.' What a nice thing for him to say, huh?"



MOBY DICK

Produced and directed by John Huston. Screenplay by Ray Bradbury, Warner Bros., 1956. 116 mins. With: Gregory Peck, Richard Basehart.

"People used to ask me, 'When are you going to write a screenplay?' I used to answer, 'When John Huston asks me.' I was at a radio broadcast when I was 29, and John Huston sat right behind me. The temptation was to turn around, grab his hand and say, 'You're wonderful. I want to work for you.' But I held onto myself because I knew I wasn't ready.

"I let a few years go by until I'd published *The Martian Chronicles* and *The Illustrated Man*. I called my agent Ray Stark and said, 'Now I want to meet Huston.'

"Ray arranged a dinner for us, and I gave Huston all three of my books, including *DARK CARNIVAL*. I said, 'It's simple. If you love these as much as I love you and your films, someday call me and hire me.' On his way to Africa to do *THE AFRICAN QUEEN*, Huston wrote me and said, 'I've read the books. You're right. Someday we'll do something together.'

"I didn't see him again till August of 1953. I was browsing for old books with Ray Harryhausen when I got this phone call. There was a message from Huston. He invited me to his hotel. I told him I'd just finished *FAHRENHEIT 451*. He said, 'How would you like to come to Ireland and write *MOBY DICK*?'

"I told him I'd never read it. He said, 'Kid, why don't you go home tonight and read as much as you can?' I stayed up as late as I could and read maybe 200 pages. I went back to Huston and said, 'I'm 33. I'm old enough now. That's a good age to read *MOBY DICK*. Yes, I'll do it.'

"It was a hell of a job understanding that book. There are still many parts I don't understand."



FAHRENHEIT 451

Directed by Francois Truffaut. Screenplay by Truffaut and Jean-Louis Richard, based on Ray Bradbury's novel. Universal, 1966. 112 mins. In color. With: Julie Christie, Oskar Werner, Cyril Cusack.

"Truffaut said he wanted to do *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN* and

asked if I could come to France for the summer to do the screenplay. I was all ready to pack up the family and go. He approached various studios, but no one wanted to put up the money. What a shame, huh?"

"Truffaut said he was going to try *FAHRENHEIT 451* next because it was a bigger project, a longer novel, so we signed a contract on that. It took him at least a year to get the studio to finance it. He offered me the screenplay and I said, 'I've done a stage play on it, and I've exhausted myself on the material. I think I'd do a bad job.' I let him go ahead with his own screenwriter. The results, I thought, were very good indeed. It has a terrific ending that makes me cry every time I see it.

"I went to Westwood and observed the lines around the block at the Bruin Theater, just blocks from UCLA. You must remember, this is long before *THE GRADUATE* or *LOVE STORY*—when the cinema was really taken over by the young. I could see the coming of the future watching those lines around the block every night for ten weeks.

"I told the studio: 'The film is doing great at a theater just 100 yards from the campus gates. Put the film in every college town in America, and you'll get your money back within a couple of weeks.' Instead, they put it in any old theater around the country with these ads that made it look like a romance of some sort, and it took years for it to make a profit. No one listened, but I was a prophet, wasn't I?"



THE ILLUSTRATED MAN

Directed by Jack Smight. Screenplay by H. B. Kreitsek. Based on the book and three short stories, "The Long Rain," "The Veldt," and "The Last Night of the World." Warner Bros., 1969. 103 mins. In color. With: Rod Steiger, Claire Bloom.

"Every single student film that's ever been done from one of my stories is superior to anything in *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN*. It fell on its hunkers because the producer, Howard Kreitsek, wrote the screenplay. That gentleman was certainly not a writer. Obviously, it wasn't a happy experience, though there are a lot of nice people connected with the project.

"Rod Steiger and Claire Bloom are wonderful performers and were wonderful in the film. The problem was they didn't have a screenplay. When the film was under production, I went to the studio. Rod said, 'Have you read the screenplay?' No one had ever asked me to. If you want me to help you, you must ask for my help. It's very simple: you hand me a screenplay and say, 'Get back to me within 24 hours.' No money involved, all free.

"One day, I asked the director for a copy of the script. He gave me one but he didn't say anything like, 'Call me and let me know.' I went back to my office, threw the script in the file and closed the drawer. I never read it."



THE PICASSO SUMMER

Directed by Serge Bourginon. Screenplay by Ray Bradbury, Warner Bros., 1969. 96 mins. In color. With: Albert Finney, Yvette Mimieux.

"The director took off for Europe and, behind my back, tore my script to shreds. He had a great actor in Albert Finney and a vivacious, charming actress in Yvette Mimieux. There was also a wonderful score and a theme which has been recorded by Barbra Streisand, *Summer Me, Winter Me*. But the film was never seen because it's so bad.

"I forced the producers, Campbell-Silver-Cosby, to fire the director once they saw the footage. I said, 'You don't have a film here. You've got to do it over.' They wouldn't do it. They finally got up enough courage to bring in another director, but by that time there was no money left. I still believe that if I could get Warner Bros. to give me the film and an editor like Margaret Booth or the late Verna Fields, I could cut it down to an hour special and they'd have something. Once you cut the junk out, there's a lot of good stuff there. I'm pressuring Warners to let me do that, but I don't know what will happen."



MARTIAN CHRONICLES

Directed by Michael Anderson. Screenplay by Richard Matheson, based on Bradbury's novel. NBC-TV, 110 mins. per segment; three segments, 1980. In color. With: Rock Hudson, Gayle Hunnicutt, Bernie Casey, Bernadette Peters, Fritz Weaver.

"It's obvious the way that film is directed that someone was very, very bored. There's no sense of excitement. If I were going to become a director, and didn't wake up thinking, 'This is the greatest job in the world, I would quit!

"His boredom shows in the timing of the scenes, the excruciating lagging pace and the ponderousness of it. It was so disappointing. I've never seen the 90-minute version that ran in European theaters. Maybe the cutting improved it. I'd like to see it, but I haven't been able to get my hands on a print. I taped the video version, but wound up erasing it."



“Clayton wanted me to hear Delerue’s music. I didn’t want to listen or to discuss concepts. The film had been overbaked with concepts.”

COMPOSER
JAMES HORNER

believing that space is real. So I put a move in that shot,” Silver explained. “The idea is to come up with any trick to divert the eye so the audience says, ‘Hey, that’s a pretty countryside,’ when it doesn’t exist.”

Not all of the film’s matte paintings were as simple to execute—or were as effective—as the Fury-road shot. In one case, Dyer wanted a daytime shot of the carnival in full swing with Green Town visible in the distance. “The idea was to show the geography of the town and carnival in juxtaposition,” said Silver, who started as an animation assistant on TRON and ended up supervising eight other artists on the 350 background paintings needed for the film. “I painted it [see photos page 48], but was never really satisfied. Anyway, they scrapped the idea.”

The shot, or something similar, was still needed, so Silver took another crack at it. “We did a shot with the carnival at a distance in the field,” he said. “We composited a plate I had shot in Vermont with an action plate of the miniature carnival with a moving ferris wheel. Actually,

I think it was a whole pack of trouble for a small shot. Since the carnival was a miniature, we wouldn’t see people or action on the fairgrounds. We got around that by bringing up the foliage so that you could see the tents and ferris wheel turning, but not much else. The foreground contained a cornfield which Harrison Ellenshaw had started [Silver had to be hospitalized briefly, and Ellenshaw filled in to keep the work moving]. The problem was matching the texture and color so you don’t know where the real corn breaks off and the painted corn begins. You don’t have any latitude for error.

“It was also hard trying to get the miniature carnival to fit into the plate,” Silver added. “I ended up painting out most of the carnival miniature because it was *looking* painted. More often than not when the shot’s a real pain, you reach a point where you say ‘If they’re happy with it, it’s done.’”

Of all Dyer’s embellishments, none pleased him more than his pet ‘bete noir’—a go-for-the-throat scare sequence designed to replace Alan Hall’s giant claw (see page 34), which had been scrapped by director Jack Clayton for being “too literal.”

“The film needed a terror sequence showing the two boys being menaced by the evil of the carnival, something that would really jolt the audience,” Dyer explained. “My biggest fear is spiders, and I thought of using them. And not just ordinary spiders—but tarantulas.”

Dyer’s spider concept grew from a moment in Bradbury’s screenplay in which the boys poke their noses into a carnival wagon during a night-time exploration. Out of the inky blackness, a spider scuttles along, startling the boys (and most preview audiences). Dyer reasoned if *one* spider could do that, what might several *hundred* do?

Although Jack Clayton reportedly had some reservations about the spider invasion—in fact, he had reservations about *most* of the new footage—he insisted on directing the sequence himself, working on an elevated, enclosed set representing the Hallows bedroom. “The shots were all done with very low-key, moody

lighting,” Dyer explained. “That was for carrying the mood, but also to camouflage the fact that both boys had grown about six inches since the first round of shooting.”

Largely in montage, actors Peterson and Carson are shown batting, fleeing from, and reacting to the furry wonders. To get cast and crew used to the huge, hairy spiders, several were obtained early and brought to the set. Some crew members so overcame their revulsion that they began carrying them on their shoulders, giving them pet names. But not Lee Dyer. “I’d gotten so I could at least appreciate their beautiful markings,” he said. “Once, an assistant put a tarantula on my arm. Normally, they don’t move, but this one moved faster than I thought. I had to have it removed. They have these little claws, you see. They also *purr*.”

Since it’s next to impossible to get a tarantula to actually launch an attack—except, perhaps, on effects supervisors—the production crew commissioned special effects wiz Isodoro Raponi to create nine mechanical spiders for close-ups involving the two young actors. “When they wanted me to make mechanical spiders, I do what I do whenever I make anything mechanical—I went back to Leonardo da Vinci,” said the Italian-born Raponi, who was associated with mentor Carlo Rambaldi (CE3K, E.T.) for nearly 20 years. “What Da Vinci studied from nature, he always applied to the making of a mechanical part. When we make gears and pulleys for the movies, the mechanism may not be the same, but the principle is.”

Raponi’s mechanical spiders were both life-sized and incredibly life-like. Made of rubber, hand-painted and flocked with animal hair, their string-driven movements were absolutely fluid. “Each of the spider’s legs is on a piano wire that feeds into a stainless steel pulley-reel off camera,” he explained. “The reel is divided into four parts. Each section controls two legs. By the position on the reel and the speed you crank it, you determine how quick, and which way, the leg will move.

“I realized that when a person walks, he moves his left leg and right



The brief glimpse of the true, horrific face of the Dust Witch was created by postproduction animation after Jack Clayton rejected Robert Schiffer’s makeup design (above), a one-piece mask built by Stan Winston. Disney animators took normal footage of Pam Grier (top left) and overlaid artwork adding wrinkles (top center) and shadows (top right). The two were combined (bottom left) and tinted green, with pulses of light coming from the eye sockets (bottom center). When the bright green tint was deemed too excessive, a pale, ghostly look was ultimately settled on (bottom right).

arm together,” Raponi added. “For the tarantulas, I had to find a way of making the first left leg move with the next-to-last right leg and so on. It sounds simple when it’s built, but it was murder trying to calculate the movements and where the piano wire had to go on the reel.”

The mechanical spiders are almost impossible to differentiate in person or on camera, a masterpiece of art and engineering. But Raponi is quick to duck the superstar trappings attached to many effects artists, including his former associate, Rambaldi. “When I was with Carlo in the early days, we used to have seven films going at one time,” Raponi recalled. “Sometimes our budget was \$50 or \$100—total. But that work was so much more complicated than what was done on E.T.”

“I like clarifying everything right from the beginning. Other people like talking big,” Raponi added. “If someone is going to spend extra money on my work, they’re going to know exactly what they’ll have. With other people, when the filmmaker goes to shoot the effect, it doesn’t work. On KING KONG, Carlo and Rick Baker came to solve the mechanical problems on the monkey. They made promises. When they did their tests, nothing worked. Two o’clock in the morning, Federico deLaurentiis called me in Italy saying, ‘You have to get here or I’ll send them home. We don’t do this movie.’ I never wanted to leave Italy, but I signed the contract by Telex to make everyone happy. I gave them the ideas for the hair, the rubber on Kong. I did all the animation because the director didn’t want to see any of the others around. Now everybody takes the credit and doesn’t talk about me.

“Today, Carlo and I get along better than we once did,” Raponi said. “He called me to help on E.T., but I’m happy with Disney. Carlo is not stupid. He wants to make money. I want to live well, too, but I have to live with *myself*, also.”

Left: makeup supervisor Robert Schiffer (standing), effects supervisor Alan Hall (r) and two assistants touch-up the prop arm used to film the crushing of Charles Hallows’s hand. Hall holds the rods that force the “bone” through a pre-cut section of “skin.” When the shot proved too gruesome for the studio’s taste, the view of the bone sticking out (right) was trimmed.





Director Jack Clayton may have resented the intrusion of high-powered special effects into his subtle film, but he *did* approve of the once-over given the film's sound track at the hands of Oscar-winner Richard Portman (DEER HUNTER). Recently hired to head the studio's sound department—after freelancing on films by Altman, Peckinpah and Hal Ashby—the pony-tailed sound wizard attempted to match Bradbury's visual imagination with a strange, inventive soundtrack.

"You read the script describing sounds like 'the wail of tormented souls' and you wonder how in hell to get that across," Portman said. "For instance, when the circus goes up in smoke, we tried creating sounds like souls being whisked off into space. David Horton [Portman's assistant] selected some tire squeals. We slowed them down and ran them through lots of electronic tools to make them distort.

"One day, we were creating screeching, echoing sounds for the Mirror Maze scene," Portman added. "The speakers were rattling so hard it started making the door of the men's room rattle. David and I thought it was more exciting than anything that was going on in the booth, so we ran out and recorded it. Things that are artistic never come from a pattern. They're God-given."

Because many of the effects were finished at the virtual last minute—and the time allotted for the work was cut by one month due to scheduling problems—Portman had a tough time developing and perfecting appropriate sounds. "We never knew whether we came up with would match the finished film," Portman explained. "We just tried coming up with a unique, organic soundtrack instead of the dead-letter it was before."

As with his special effects colleagues, Portman attempted to link his work with the film's thematic ele-

ments. Spider sounds figured importantly. "We recorded 15 tarantulas on the stage with eight or nine stereo mikes," Portman explained. "We had them walking and running on glass, on styrofoam, across piano keys. For the Dust Witch, we're always using those sounds just under the surface, weaving them in and out."

In addition to beefed-up sound effects, the film's postproduction treatment included a brand new score. Back in the closing months of 1981, director Jack Clayton had approached French composer George Delerue to write the film's music. "I made a dummy music track for certain scenes," Clayton explained. "I used bits of Strauss' *Death and Trans-*

figuration," bits of THE SHINING, a little Prokofiev."

Clayton had hoped to let the natural quiet of the story carry most of the movie. Delerue agreed, and delivered an understated, wistful score that used music sparingly. The main theme, for example, was a simple, uplifting piece written for solo flute, harp and strings. But when the film was screened for the Disney brass, one of the main areas to receive criticism was Delerue's score. Explained Tom Wilhite: "The Delerue score was a nice one, but in the wrong picture." What they wanted, it seemed, was something a bit more bombastic.

Jerry Goldsmith (ALIEN, OUTLAND) was initially pegged to perk

up the score, but he was hampered by scheduling conflicts. The studio then called 28-year-old James Horner (WOLFEN, STAR TREK II) to rush into the fray. "I was caught in a rather difficult position," Horner recalled. "I never saw Clayton's cut and I never read the book or the screenplay. Tom Wilhite told me what he perceived were the mistakes of the previous score; they didn't want it too dark, too dismal or slow. It had to have a lot of energy.

"At the same time, Jack Clayton was trying to give me a cassette of Delerue's music," Horner continued. "I didn't want to hear it and didn't want to discuss concepts. The film had already been overbaked with con-

The climactic, other-worldly storm that hovers over Dark's Carnival and sucks it up into the sky, a combination of cloud tank footage, animated electrical discharges, a matte painting and a 20'x24' miniature of the carnival suspended upside down and dropped in a timed and sequenced pattern. Inset: Disney technicians stand on the rim of the studio's massive new cloud tank. At six feet wide, tall and deep, it's one third larger than the equivalent set-up at Industrial Light & Magic.





Shawn Carson, Jason Robards and Vidal Peterson scamper back to Green Town following the destruction of Dark's Carnival, a brightly-colored matte painting by Jessie Silver (shown inset, working on the painting shown below). Only the left edge of the meadow is real, and Silver had to match the color and texture of real grass with painted grass, one of the toughest assignments possible. When Lee Dyer decided to change the scene's lighting, Michael Lloyd was called in to retouch the painting.



cepts. I finally told everyone: 'I don't want to hear about what you want. Just give me the film without any preconceived notions!'"

Horner completed his work in about a month, scoring the picture virtually "wall-to-wall." Where Delerue recorded less than a half hour of music, Horner's score ran well over an hour.

"There's a very fine line to tread when you do these kinds of films," said Horner, who used 61 musicians and a woman's choir at full tilt. "I didn't want to give it a life-or-death quality like WOLFEN. I wanted to

convey a fantasy-adventure mood that wasn't conventional. When a film has a lot of special effects, I think it's a good idea to establish musical themes that are easy to grasp and not weird or strung-out. It would have been easy to go very avant-garde, but I wanted to give it a lighter touch."

Horner claimed one of the film's challenges was the confrontation in the library—generally considered one of the film's strongest sequences. "There's a powerful moment when Mr. Dark throws a book at Halloway saying, 'You're lost, old man!'" Horner explained. "They had spot-

ted music to come in on that line, which I thought was melodramatic and soap-operaish. Instead, I used women's voices very strongly, weaving them in and out almost like a mist floating through the front door of that library."

Another key sequence, musically, is when Mr. Cooger (Bruce Fitcher) is shown traveling backwards on the carousel, regressing into a dangerous tyke. "What I definitely *did not* want to do was play a calliope backwards," Horner said. "Instead, I combined a full orchestra with this collage of various calliope pieces. The calliope

begins to play "The Blue Danube Waltz." Then the orchestra creeps under that with a haunting theme and the whole mood begins to shift. We also did layers and layers of other calliope tunes weaving in and out."

A final soundtrack embellishment came with the scripting and recording of the brief narration for the film's elegiac opening, and happily-ever-after wrapup. Bradbury naturally assumed *he* would be asked to write the passages, but the studio hired another writer for the job. "It was ridiculous," fumed Bradbury, who had written his own narration in an

For a daytime shot of the carnival with Green Town visible in the distance, a miniature ferris wheel was positioned in front of a painting by Jessie Silver. The shot was never deemed successful, and was later replaced with a view of the carnival nestled in the middle of a field, its ferris wheel turning. Left: Don Henry positions the miniature occupants of the ferris wheel and Jessie Silver touches up the spokes as Dick Kendall adjusts the camera. Right: The shot as it would have appeared in the film.



early screen draft. "I have a writing style that's pretty identifiable. I started pressuring quietly here and there. A little bit was cut, then a little more. I think Disney finally realized I'm not that easy to imitate. I ought to know—I have a hard enough time doing it myself sometimes."

Holding out the olive branch, the studio tested Bradbury for the voice of the narrator. While he didn't land the stint—Arthur Hill did—Bradbury found himself in the company of such also-rans as Hal Holbrook and Wilfred Brimley. "The nice thing," he said, "is that Disney had the courtesy to let me have my shot at it."

In the early spring of 1983, director Jack Clayton closely oversaw the final dubbing of the completed reels and the ongoing integration of the special effects. "Clayton was wary Disney might hoke up everything," one source noted. "He's a pretty effective traffic cop."

Ironically, Clayton had finally been given the effects expertise he had been calling for since the start of the project. But with the shooting long over and his cut of the film largely discarded, he resented their insertion into his delicate film.

"I had been rumbling about the opticals," he admitted. "Because they were so hot on TRON, Disney denied me the best facilities from the beginning. But once they saw the results the lousy effects had on my film, they decided—as people who feel guilty always do—to overkill. The spiders were my idea, but not 500 of them. I believe the way the film was shown last July was superior in subtlety and imagination to what the film is like now. I regret the loss of the understatement. So does Ray."

Often, Clayton and Bradbury were as unhappy with what was cut out as with what was added. For example, the inclusion of the new Mirror Maze sequence prompted the studio to trim an earlier scene in which Will and his father have a heart-to-heart talk, culminating in Will daring his father to climb a trellis to his second-floor bedroom. The cut outraged both writer and director. "We both feel that scene was the heart of the film," Clayton said. "The scene originally ended with Will reaching out his hand to help his father make the last few steps into the room. That's a very subtle, important movement in their relationship. The image was meant to link with the later image of the father's hand reaching out to help Will out of the Mirror Maze. Disney has no notion whatever of subtlety."

As with all the changes made on the film, Tom Wilhite was quick on the defense. "I don't get my kicks intruding on someone else's movie," he said. "In his heart of hearts, I think Clayton realizes some of the changes are for the better. I hoped Bradbury and he would see that the value and taste we put into the film would outweigh the disagreement on the trellis scene, a relatively small issue."

"It just didn't work dramatically," Wilhite added. "If the father has enough strength and bravery and spirit to climb the trellis, why finish with the picture? His problem is taken care of."

Bradbury was understandably concerned about many of the changes, but he was much more positive about the final results. "Overall, I'd say I'm pleased by 90 percent of what's in the film. And I'm absolutely in love with James Horner's score. But losing part of the trellis scene was tough. There was also talk of cutting the Dust Witch out of the library scene completely, but she's been reinstated. So it's a trade off."

Meanwhile, in the studio's upper echelons, key marketplace decisions were being nailed down. The film would open in a wide break at prestigious theaters, rather than the "kiddie" circuit traditionally the province of Disney fare. Print advertising would feature darkly atmospheric artwork. James Horner's score would be released as a soundtrack album. Swept up in the rush of events, hopes for the film's commercial and critical viability rallied again.

The only setback was the official cancellation of the computer animation sequence just three weeks before the film was set to open. But despite the problems with MAGI's efforts, Lee Dyer's confidence in the film never diminished. "I'm honestly excited about it because I know what I had to work with," he explained. "The film still has flaws, but in order to correct those, you would have had to reshoot the entire picture. It's hard for me to stand back and look at the film, but I think it measures up closer to what we'd hoped for than I ever expected it to."

Ray Bradbury went on the road to talk up the film with media reps. Although notoriously press-shy, Clayton might also have been persuaded to hit the ballyhoo circuit, but for one timely intervention: a European location-hunt for *THE BOURNE IDENTITY*, his upcoming spy thriller starring Burt Reynolds. Whether critical brickbats or bouquets would be hurled, Clayton wouldn't be there to field them.

And so, nearly two years after its launch, the shooting and shouting drew to a close. On the eve of the film's release, Ray Bradbury was gearing up for the best and the worst. "Well, either we'll jump for joy," he smiled, "or go out and get roaring drunk, won't we?"

If the old Hollywood axiom that goes "Happy set, lousy film" contained a nugget of truth, Bradbury and company would be home free; *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES* would have easily earned its stripes as a critical and financial knockout. The truth, however, was somewhat more down-to-earth.

The film bowed to mixed, but generally approving, critical response. Clayton's direction and Bradbury's script both won praise, as did the film's production values. Jonathan Pryce's intense, saturnine Mr. Dark pocketed the lion's share of acting kudos. Overall, the film amassed Disney's best reviews in a decade, outside of the little-seen *TEX*.

During its initial week of release, however, the film stalled at the box office. Though first-week grosses were respectable (if not remarkable) in Chicago and Los Angeles, the film bombed in New York, earning just

\$310,000 at 65 theaters. (In comparison, *HOUSE ON SORORITY ROW*, a cheapie slasher flick, earned \$700,000 at 68 theaters during its opening week.) Nationwide, the film took in about \$4 million at 800 theaters during its first 12 days. Disney sources admitted the take was significantly below expectations. Whether reviews or word of mouth would boost the film's fortunes was unclear at press time.

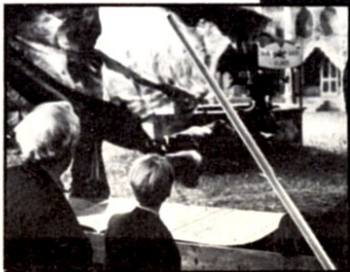
On the Disney lot these days, the rambling Green Town sets stand ghostly, silently reproachful. No boys scamper through the streets this spring evening. The hot sun has scorching a few layers of paint off the greens and browns of the clapboard. Spraycan graffiti scars the imitation red brick walls. A recent film gig has left Tetley's Tobacco Store decked out as a gaudy florist shop, the funeral parlor as a tweedy bookstore. It's only natural—Hollywood urban renewal. Besides, the set's a money-maker, not a Bradbury shrine.

These days the streets of Green Town seem just a tad seedy in their abandonment, and very, very still. But every now and then the wind does the strangest thing. It comes tearing through the square in a howl, sending leaves and papers caroming down the alleys like bats out of hell. And just as suddenly, it simmers down to nothing. In that pause comes a crazy minor-key melody, drifting along with the wind. Just a few somber chords, then nothing.

A studio messenger making his last run with a ghetto blaster on his bike? A workman taking a few licks on a harmonica? Bradbury himself, playing a little prank, chuckling as he darts around a corner like the White Rabbit? No, more likely it's just a trick of the imagination. Of course. We're all adults here, after all.

But any kid could have pegged that phantom music in a flash—especially a kid fallen under the spell of Bradbury's hot-house imagination

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CARNIVAL involved an inverted 20' x 24' miniature, shown being touched up by painter Ray Barone. On the stage floor, Robert Means (l), Hans Metz and Michael Paris are working on the monofilament lines that attach each piece of the carnival to the base. When shot by an inverted camera, dropped pieces appear to fly up and out of frame. Below: The full-scale carnival set begins to blow away, an effect rigged during principal photography by Alan Hall.



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**EFFECTS SUPERVISOR
LEE DYER**

Why, what else but a circus calliope? Yessirrebob, a wheezing hurdy-gurdy contraption coughing out a mournful lament. But for what? For whom? For the filmed version of *Something Wicked This Way Comes* that might have been? Maybe so.

But could any movie translation have turned out as superfine, as scarily wonderful as the printed word? Or does that only seem possible when the film flickers across the mindscreens of adolescent readers suckered in by a master spellbinder? Who knows?

The wind stays calm. Time to leave Green Town. Time to return to grown-up matters. But as the make-believe town recedes in the distance, that strange carnival music teases the air again, changing a humdrum day into—well, something else. For a minute—just a fleeting moment—it was October in Green Town again, a rare time for boys. □



Whispers
Witchcraft
Depavity
Aberrations
Evils

DO THEY EVER
RETURN TO POSSESS
THE LIVING?

A STRANGE
NEW EXPERIENCE
in *Shock*
from JACK CLAYTON
Director of "Room At The Top"

20
Century-Fox
presents

DEBORAH KERR
the
Innocents

Adapted for the screen by
WILLIAM ARCHIBALD and TRUMAN CAPOTE
from HENRY JAMES'
masterpiece of macabre love,
"The Turn of The Screw"

BE FOREWARNED!
In your own interests see this
picture from the very begin-
ning to the mind-stunning end!

CINEMASCOPE

co-starring PETER WYNGARDE · MEGS JENKINS · with MICHAEL REDGRAVE as THE UNCLE and PAMELA FRANKLIN · MARTIN STEPHENS · JACK CLAYTON · ALBERT FENNELL
Produced & Directed by Executive Producer
as "The Innocents"

Jack Clayton's THE INNOCENTS

This 1961 adaptation of James' "The Turn of the Screw" remains one of the best ghost stories ever filmed.

by Stephen Rebello

The top drawer straight-faced ghost story is a bona fide film rarity. Traditionally, movie makers have preferred playing ectoplasmic visitations for giggles rather than gooseflesh in the likes of *THE GHOST GOES WEST*, the *TOPPER* films, *BLITHE SPIRIT*, *THIRTEEN GHOSTS*, *THE SPIRIT IS WILLING* and the recent *KISS ME GOODBYE*.

Yet there *have* been a handful of serious ghost tales on film. The very best of these—*THE UNINVITED*, *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR*, *A PORTRAIT OF JENNY*, bits of *DEAD OF NIGHT* and, to stretch a point, *VERTIGO*—can hold a bright-glowing candle to the very finest "cinéfantastique" has to offer.

Rightfully included in that rarefied circle is Jack Clayton's *THE INNOCENTS*, released in 1961.

Based on one of literature's most brilliantly serpentine, shivery novels of psychological horror—Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*—Jack Clayton's intelligent, moody and elegantly-enigmatic tour-de-force is a high water mark in supernatural films. Clearly crafted for and by grownup sensibilities, magnificently photographed in velvety black and white by Freddie Francis, sensitively acted by Deborah Kerr, literate yet equally rich in disturbing imagery, *THE INNOCENTS* proved a heroically successful attempt at filmically realizing James' devilishly tricky work—a coup that had eluded the best efforts of adapters over several decades.

THE INNOCENTS arrived on the screen hobbled with a burden few horror films ever do: a source work impeccable in cultural respectability. From its publication in 1895, *The Turn of the Screw* has been considered a masterful conundrum, the literary equivalent of a flawlessly-constructed Chinese box puzzle. James' readers found a tale tantalizingly multi-layered and reeking with sly ambiguity. For years, debates have raged: Is it *more* than merely a rattling good Victorian hair-raiser? A terrifying version of reality filtered through the warped perceptions of a



Deborah Kerr as Governess Miss Giddens and Martin Stephens as Miles, haunted by ghosts or psychological demons? Director Jack Clayton retained the tantalizing ambiguity of Henry James' classic story. Clayton personally tailored the film's ad campaign (left), which stressed the film's controversial nature and adult aspects.

sexually-frustrated madwoman? While the controversy played on, Henry James never tipped a hand as to his intentions, preferring to let readers and critics spin their own tangled webs. "I meant to scare the world with that story," the author insisted.

And scare the world he did. An enormous best-seller, *The Turn of the Screw* centers on a fluttery 20-year-old parson's daughter hired as the governess for two small children. Fired by barely-repressed attraction for the children's dandyish London-based uncle, the governess (James never names her) strikes off for the family's country estate with one dictate: never bother the uncle with the children's care. Instead of finding the fog-shrouded, rotting mansion and little monsters she imagined, the governess is dazzled. The house and grounds are picture-perfect. Miles and Flora are radiantly handsome and disarmingly poised.

But inevitably, the screw *indeed* begins to turn. A letter arrives explaining how the gentlemanly young Miles was booted from boarding school as "an injury to the others." Then, the questioning of the simple, complacent housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, further ferrets out that the children had a strange fascination for the household's former governess, Miss Jessel, and her sadistic lover, Quint the valet—both of whom died under unsavory circumstances. The governess is sickened as she learns that not only were the children the couple's constant companions, but that they also witnessed (and perhaps were even involved in) the couple's torrid love-making sessions.

Armed with this "knowledge," the governess' moral outrage slips into overdrive. Perhaps, she reasons, Miles and Flora not only *saw*, but much, much more. From then on, the children's every word and move—the constant, secretive whispers, the dodging of direct questions—take on a sinister, deceptive edge. The governess begins seeing the apparitions of Quint and Jessel around every corner of Blye Manor from tower tops to the children's classroom. She becomes convinced that the sexually-ravenous spirits have possessed Miles and Flora

and that head-on exorcism is the only way out. The novel ends chillingly with young Miles falling dead in the arms of the governess who concludes that the tormented boy is finally free. But who and what caused his heart to stop—Quint or the governess herself?

The novel was pretty racy stuff—and was pounced upon by adapters. In 1950, playwright William Archibald's stage version (*The Innocents*) proved viable enough, although a Play-of-the-Week television version ten years later starring Ingrid Bergman did not.

James' work, like fine wine, didn't always travel well. And although plans for a movie version of *The Turn of the Screw* were regularly announced over the years, it wasn't until 1960 that an oddball cluster of Right People converged at the Right Moment to make the film happen. The prime mover was director Jack Clayton, then white-hot with the critical and financial success of *ROOM AT THE TOP* (1959), a gritty peek at social-class angst.

The feistily-independent Clayton startled industry types by jauntily thumbing his nose at prefabricated deals with him to direct such properties as *SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY MORNING* and *SONS AND LOVERS*. Instead, he jumped at the challenge of filming *The Turn of the Screw*, particularly because everyone was telling him it was un-filmable.

"I absolutely loathe being pigeon-holed," said Clayton. "That's precisely what happened to me after *ROOM AT THE TOP*. They called it 'a breakthrough for British cinema,' 'the kitchen sink trend in films' and that sort of stuff. They were anxious to pin all kinds of labels on me that critics like to do—through their own laziness. But, you see, I have to fall in love with a piece of material or I can't do it. It may sound pompous but I'm not a director for the money, but for a worse reason—love of the work I do. After *ROOM AT THE TOP*, there was no question I could have made anything I wanted, and I thought of *The Turn of the Screw*. James is very fashionable right now, but that had nothing to do with my making the picture. I first read it when I was ten years old and found it a hell of a story. Then, later, I saw other things about it. For instance, it's a story of passion. Miss Giddens (the name given the governess in Archibald's play) is driven on by a wild, destructive passion, and yet she's innocent. There

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In a medium that has never been particularly receptive to ambiguity, Clayton flew in the face of convention by scrupulously maintaining Miss Giddens' point of view in the film's ghost sittings. Not only the children but Mrs. Grose the housekeeper claim not to have seen what the governess (and the audience) sees quite clearly. Who is telling the truth? "Each of them—as each saw it," Clayton explained. "I honestly wouldn't have been that interested in taking the story on if it had been *just* a ghost story. In preparing it, I was very conscious of making the material very Freudian, of always trying to keep the audience off-balance. Simply seeing the governess as hysterical is

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The film was moderately budgeted at \$1 million, with shooting to take place entirely in English locations and on the Shepperton Studios soundstages. Although, Fox gave Clayton latitude in interpreting the material, his co-production deal with 20th Century-Fox came with several strings attached. Not the least of them was playwright William Archibald.

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AND I, AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER and FROM HERE TO ETERNITY.

Kerr, who was to receive some of the shiniest notices of her career for the film, was in perfect sync with Clayton as to how to pitch her performance. Recalling the film in a letter, she observed, "With Jack Clayton's help, plus my own feelings, I tried to tread a very narrow tight-rope between Miss Giddens being an internally and sexually tormented woman, and a completely normal human being who found herself beset by evil powers. I think Jack and I both wanted to leave it to the audience, which resulted in the film's strangely disturbing quality."

Having Deborah Kerr as the governess by 'fait accompli' was probably one of Clayton's few preproduction pleasures. For the dicey, centerpiece roles of the two angelic-demonic children, several hundred professional and nonprofessional tykes were bypassed before Clayton found 11-year-olds Pamela Franklin and Martin Stephens. "I only found the children two weeks before we were to start shooting," explained Clayton. "Pamela stood right out. I never even actually tested her for the part. Of the

boys I saw, I only tested four."

Stephens, previously had appeared in *THE HELL-FIRE CLUB* and *COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS* (also with Deborah Kerr) and *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED*. In the latter, Stephens played the icy, platinum-haired leader of a super-race of space children. *THE INNOCENTS* was to be Pamela Franklin's first film, and her quality of steely, creepy gentility would serve the film nicely. Later roles in such films as *THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE*, Clayton's Dickens-esque *OUR MOTHER'S HOUSE* and *LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE* would exploit these qualities.

THE INNOCENTS sealed Clayton's reputation as an extraordinarily skilled direction of children. Taking two relative neophytes like Franklin and Stephens, the director coaxed and molded both into delivering accomplished, even chilling performances. One of the film's bravura highpoints was Stephen's recitation of a poem in which he seems to summon an un-named "master" (Quint?) from the dead. As the governess watches with increasing alarm, Stephens orates with tone and gestures as absurdly grownup as they are

Kerr tries to force Franklin to look out onto the lake and see the ghost of Miss Jessel (Clytie Jessop) standing in the rain among the reeds. Clayton's objective camera angle sees the ghost, but Franklin sees nothing and goes mad. Kerr and Franklin are shown during filming at Sheffield Park (inset), resting between takes. The scenes were meant to convey summer, but the weather was cold. "I had wool underwear and a hot water bottle under my dress," said Kerr.



darkly, comically unnerving: "What shall I say when my Lord comes a-calling? What shall I say when he knocks at my door? What shall I say when his feet enter softly? Leaving the marks of his grave on my floor."

The scene builds to a crescendo as Stephens hurls open a window to the night—a feathery blackness where evil seems to hover just beyond the camera's range.

These moments, however, troubled Clayton. "I am very protective of children," Clayton observed. "In

fact, the children never saw the script of *THE INNOCENTS*. They only learned the next day's lines the night before each day's shooting. I was nervous that they might come to psychological harm from reading the story and so, both children played their roles through mimicry. Everything that motivated their performances came from Deborah and me. She attracted them because of her radiance and they were very much in awe of a great star. I think because of the purity of the direction, of watching children embody the concepts you're working toward, I so enjoy directing children. If the children did not work in the film, the film was gone."

In further casting choices, Clayton chose Michael Redgrave for the one-scene role as the children's debonair uncle. Before Redgrave, another dashing star nearly won the role. Recalling the incident today, Clayton winced, "The role hadn't been cast until the last possible moment. I saw Cary Grant in the commissary and had the nerve to offer him—the biggest star at the time—this tiny part. He was so charming he did not find it an insult. He said he would do it, if I could bring back the uncle at the end of the film. I was torn. Having Cary in the film would have meant a lot to it, but seeing him at the end would have been impossible. I'm probably the only director who ever said no to Cary Grant."

For the film's ghostly lovers, Quint and Jessel, Clayton chose two performers whose sheer presence alone

Kerr is troubled by dreams of Quint's ghostly appearance on the parapet at Blye Manor, part of a montage sequence assembled by director Jack Clayton. "Through my research I found that Henry James was obsessed with Freud's work," said Clayton. "He even wrote an essay on Freud." Clayton brought out the psychological ambiguity in filming James' ghost story.





Pamela Franklin runs through a scene in the cold (note coat) at Sheffield Park as prop man Chuck Ferridno (l) and hairdresser Gordon Bond (r) look on.

would contribute to the aura of supernatural menace. As the tormented Jessel, Australian stage actress Clytie Jessop made her film bow. In the equally silent role of the handsome and obscene Quint, British stage and film actor Peter Wyngarde's saturnine sexuality helped win the part.

With casting completed, Clayton assumed his preproduction problems were over. Yet the studio had another hidden agenda lurking in the wings. "Just a week before my cinematographer Freddie Francis and I were to start shooting, I suddenly realized the contract said the film had to be made in Cinemascope," Clayton recalled, with a shudder. In absolute horror, I called the agents and lawyers and said, "We'll have to tell them this has to be changed. We can't shoot this in Cinemascope." Well, there was no way they were going to let me off the hook."

Clayton's discovery of the contractual stipulation was a major stumbling-block, since he and cameraman Francis had planned for an extremely flowing camera style and a great number of stark close-ups neither of which were exactly specialties of the rather clumsy widescreen process. Yet Francis who had worked with Clayton on ROOM AT THE TOP, and is (and was) considered one of the industry's masters (THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN, THE ELEPHANT MAN) not only made THE INNOCENTS one of the finest examples of black and white cinematography on record, but also one of the few truly intelligent, resourceful uses of Cinemascope's capabilities. "With Cinemascope, you have very little depth of field, and for our film, that would have been a great loss."

Clayton explained. "Freddie solved the problem by devising a way of belting so much light on the stage that we were actually able to stop down on the lens. Of course, that meant that even in some of the very small Shepperton interiors such as the governess' room, which was only about 11' by 14', there had to be some 50 5,000-watt brute lights beaming down on the actors. Since THE INNOCENTS was a period picture, that meant costumes, and you can imagine how uncomfortable that could have been. By today's standards, most sets that size could be lighted by a single brute. I credit a lot of the film's success to Freddie. He is a genius."

THE INNOCENTS was to break movie precedent and influence movie imitators by showing ghosts as palpable beings often seen in glowing sunlight, rather than as soupy animated ectoplasm or superimpositions. It was perhaps Clayton's real-life experience with 'ghosting' that strongly influenced the film's no-nonsense approach to the spirit world. "I had a very strange experience—something that had never happened to me before," Clayton said. "I had just bought my mother a house in the country and sometimes I would work there. Of course, there was a very great difference between the grand house in the film and this lovely little cottage, but I was haunted by the story to the extent that I used to see Miss Jessel standing there in the garden of my mother's house. I wasn't frightened at all. It made me see the way in which the ghosts should be presented—subtly and without a lot of clichés."

On February 6, 1961, THE INNOCENTS officially began 12 weeks of principal photography. Cast and crew spent the first several weeks shooting locations at Sheffield Park in Brighton. Clayton found the pictur-

esquely decaying Georgian-style mansion and lush grounds in the pages of a magazine when his location scouts continually came up empty-handed. "The house was just what I'd been looking for, particularly because of the landscaping," Clayton enthused. "It had three separate lakes on different levels."

Once the Sheffield Park scenes were completed, the company moved to Shepperton Studios, where Wilfred Shingleton's sets occupied several soundstages. Because the cast members wore authentic period shoes on wooden floors, Clayton's sound man insisted on attaching felt pads on the shoe soles to muffle the ear-splitting clatter. Clayton and the crew found the sound man's obsession for "More felt! More felt!" so comic that on his birthday during the shooting, the director presented him with a complete wardrobe of clothing—made entirely of felt.

One of the film's most perfectly-realized and harrowing sequences was shot at Shepperton. The governess ventures into a dark hallway, armed only with her nerve and a lighted candelabra. As the camera swoops along with a frightened, worry-etched Kerr, the candlelight forms a perfect circle beyond which the screen is smudged with deep shadow. The soundtrack, which is sophisticated and understated throughout, becomes a babble of whispers, screams, hysterical laughter and moans. From behind a closed door, the governess "hears" passionate sighing of "Kiss me, Kiss me." The scene gains in voltage from the realization that the audience may be hearing the auditory hallucinations of a dangerously-unstrung mind and not the ghost of Miss Jessel.

"I was sitting at the bottom of the stairs watching Deborah," recalled actress Pamela Franklin. "They shot it silently, with no sound effects at all.

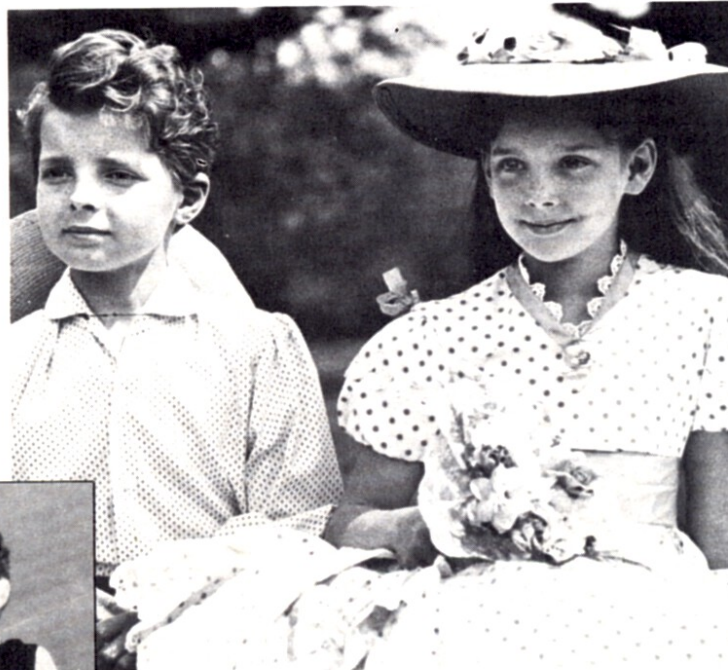
She simply looked around the set with such emotion, that with the lighting and the feeling that was created, it was scary as hell just watching it!"

For the scene, cinematographer Francis devised a special camera filter with a clear center to replicate the circle of light made by the candle, then merging into darker pigments to give the screen's parameters shadow. Since the camera was highly mobile throughout the scene, the device saved a great deal of lighting and shooting time. Elsewhere in the film, Francis' skills were no less in evidence. All of the Blye exteriors are so lush in lighting and composition that the inherent evil and corruption of the story's theme are wonderfully set in counterpoint.

The film completed photography at Shepperton Studios in May. Clayton and French composer Georges Auric (BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, THE WAGES OF FEAR) worked closely on the film's score. The two had enjoyed a fruitful working relationship six years earlier on Clayton's Oscar-winning short THE BESPOKE OVERCOAT. Although ultimately THE INNOCENTS was to be graced by a quietly eerie score, the Clayton-Auric teamwork was rocky at best. Auric's finished score failed to meet the director's approval and though Clayton wanted revisions, the composer's personal health difficulties prevented his being available. Instead Clayton commissioned Lambert Wilson to completely reorchestrate Auric's work.

One of the film's most striking musical devices was the use of a tune which acted as a ghostly leitmotiv. First heard before the credits as "O Willow, Waly" with lyrics by Paul Dehn (later screenwriter of GOLD-FINGER and several PLANET OF THE APES films), the wistful melody in a child's voice mourns lost loves. Later, the tune becomes associated with the dead Miss Jessel, whose musicbox tinkles the same refrain. In one of the film's most disquieting moments, Flora begins humming the same tune absently while she and the governess sit in a gazebo overlooking a pond. When the governess looks across the water, the apparition of Miss Jessel stares at her enigmatically. Immediately, the orchestra plays a jangled, minor-key version of the same tune, giving the scene additional *frisson*.

In postproduction, Clayton became discontent with the film's opening and credit sequence. Initially, the screenplay opened with the governess stealing away from the funeral of Miles as the townspeople whisper about her. Clayton devised something far more provocative and unsettling. Following the child's voice singing "O Willow, Waly" while the screen remains black, the credits begin to roll to the ironic chirping of birds. A tense pair of woman's hands rise into the frame, clutched in prayer to sobbing and feverish murmuring. Against a dark, non-specific backdrop, the hands and face of Deborah Kerr appear. She says, "All I want to do is save the children, not destroy them. More than anything, I love the children. They need affection, love,



Martin Stephens and Pamela Franklin as "The Innocents" who appeared in the eyes of their governess to be possessed by the ghosts of Quint and Miss Jessel (inset). "The children were brilliant," said co-star Deborah Kerr. "They were uncannily aware of the complexities of their roles and played them with disarming innocence."





The climax of *THE INNOCENTS*. The figure of Quint appears to loom over Kerr and Stephens in the garden of Blye Manor as the governess confronts the boy with accusations that he is possessed. Stephens dies in her arms but it is unclear whether he too sees the spectre. The figure of Quint in this scene, played by Peter Wyngarde (left), was a piece of statuary come to life.



Someone who will belong to them and to whom they belong."

With this sequence, Clayton introduces the theme of possession in the governess' choice of the word "belong." Further, the ambiguous background is completely faithful to James' masterplan. After all, are we eavesdropping on a devout woman's nighttime prayers? Is she babbling quietly in a madhouse? Like James, Clayton isn't supplying ready-made answers.

"That credit sequence caused me more headache and heartache than the rest of the film put together," Clayton observed. "We did it after the rest of the shooting was completed. I wanted something very evocative, very strong. It is almost an exact duplicate of a shot I have at the very end of the film, so you're not certain if she is lost in her own thoughts or is in reality."

Editing on *THE INNOCENTS* was performed by James Clark in London. The film clocked in at a brisk 99 minutes, although one of the director's stylistic nuances helped make the pace seem slightly less sprightly. Termed "multiple dissolves," the technique involved an overlay of three distinct images—one from the scene ending, a second "floating" image, the third from the beginning of the following scene—which gave the film's transitions an eerie, languid sense of flow.

After the editing was completed, Clayton presented the finished version of *THE INNOCENTS* to the studio executives. Although Fox honchos generally thought the film to be of exceptional quality, studio chief Spyros Skouras haggled with Clayton over the film's ending: the governess kisses the dead Miles on the lips.

"Spyros Skouras called me from Hollywood, while I was in London," Clayton recalled. "He said, 'You can't finish a film like that!' I asked

him why, and he sputtered, 'Because . . . because . . . it's not *done!*' Every two days for two solid weeks, he called *begging* me to change the ending, which I *would* not and *did* not do."

Without ever being previewed to a paying audience, *THE INNOCENTS* opened cold in November of 1961 in London, with New York openings following the next month. On both sides of the Atlantic, the reviews were largely raves. Even the nay-sayers grudgingly acknowledged that the film was several cuts above standard shocker fare of the day. The film was further bestowed cultural respectability by being selected for a Cannes Film Festival showing, one of the few genre films to be so singled-out.

Critical reservations, many of which were launched by genre enthusiasts, centered on what was perceived as Clayton's stacking the deck too heavily on the side of the heroine's neurosis—supposedly spoiling the ambiguous fun of the James original story. Oddly enough, others found the film's elegant production values and impeccable technique distancing as though good jolts only arise from less polished filmmaking.

There were also critics who found Clayton's handling of the ghosts interesting, but flawed. Among them is the director himself. His objections centered more on the satanic Quint than on the less pushy Miss Jessel. "I hated the way I had to do Quint," admitted Clayton. "My idea of a ghost is much more like Miss Jessel. But Quint couldn't be done that way. He had to be very dramatic and powerful—madly overacted. Particularly at the end, when he and Miss Giddens appear to be fighting over Miles. He has to be overpowering there and that wasn't to my taste."

However, despite the film's detractors, *THE INNOCENTS* remains one of the most admired and respected of film thrillers. At the box-office, the film also proved a success: Clayton says it made over \$25 million.

Revisited in the 1980s, an era of

expensive, fast-food, fast-fade shockers like *GHOST STORY*, *THE AMITYVILLE HORROR* and *POLTERGEIST* (among others)—*THE INNOCENTS* still proves a four-course gourmet feast. At a recent sold-out retrospective showing of the film at the Los Angeles County Museum, rapt audiences responded as though they had rediscovered a lost treasure—which is exactly what they had done.

For those who know and admire the film, *THE INNOCENTS* sets a standard for subtlety and style against which Jack Clayton's current foray into the fantasy realm, Ray Bradbury's *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES*, will certainly be measured. □

Cast & Credits

A 20th Century-Fox release. 11/61. 99 mins. *Directed by* Jack Clayton. *Produced by* Clayton. *Screenplay by* Truman Capote and William Archibald, based on Henry James' novel "*The Turn of the Screw*." *Additional Scenes and Dialogue by* John Mortimer. *Music by* Georges Auric. *Music composer*, Auric. *Cinematographer*, Freddie Francis. *Executive producer*, Albert Fennell. *Art Director*, Wilfrid Shingleton. *Edited by* James Clark. *Assistant directors*, Michael Birkett and Ken Softley. *Production manager*, James Ware. *Continuity*, Pamela Mann. *Camera operator*, Ronald Taylor. *Camera focus*, Ronnie Maasz and Bernard Ford. *Camera grip*, Ray Jones. *Make-up by* Harold Fletcher. *Assistant art director*, Martin Atkinson. *Scenic artist*, Alan Evans. *Costumes by* Sophie Devine.

Miss Giddens Deborah Kerr
Mrs. Grose Megs Jenkins
Uncle Michael Redgrave
Miles Martin Stephens
Flora Pamela Franklin
Peter Quint Peter Wyngarde
Miss Jessel Clytie Jessop
Anna Isla Cameron
Coachman Eric Woodburn

REVIEWS

POLTERGEIST-like shocker never lives up to its potential

THE ENTITY

A 20th-Century Fox release, 2-83, 105 mins. In color. Dolby stereo. Directed by Sidney J. Furie. Produced by Harold Schneider. Written by Frank DeFelitta, based on his own novel. Executive producers, Michael Leone and Andrew D.T. Pfeffer. Cinematographer, Stephen H. Burum. Editor, Frank J. Urioste. Production design, Charles Rosen. Visual effects designer, William Cruse. Special effects, Joe Lombardi. Music, Charles Bernstein. Set designer, Boyd Willat, Daniel Gluck.

Carolotta Moran.....	Barbara Hershey
Dr. Gary Sniderman.....	Ron Silver
Dr. Elizabeth Cooley.....	Jacqueline Brooks
Jerry Rodriguez.....	Alex Rocco
Billy.....	David Labiosa
Cindy Nash.....	Margaret Blye
Gene Kraft.....	Richard Brestoff
George Nash.....	Michael Alldredge
Joe Mehan.....	Raymond Singer
Dr. Wallcott.....	Allan Rich

THE ENTITY is a strip-tease. It slowly takes off all of Barbara Hershey's clothes, then builds to a climax that never really comes. In the end we almost feel more raped by what isn't there than her film character does.

And the sad thing is that director Sidney J. Furie and screenwriter Frank DeFelitta (adapting his own novel of the same name) have assembled a host of talented people as well as a chain of promising scenes that could have lofted the finished product beyond last year's POLTERGEIST.

The strength of this film, based on the reportedly true story of a woman

repeatedly raped by an invisible being, rests on the believability of Hershey in the central role. She easily brings that, along with her natural beauty, to bear here. The script itself builds towards increasing believability, too—from that initial assault in her bedroom, so swift it could indeed have been all in her mind, through the brutal attack in the bathroom that leaves her with livid bruises, to another that leaves her son with a broken wrist.

Charles Bernstein accompanies these assaults with appropriately throbbing music on the stereo soundtrack that could have verged on the unwittingly self-mocking if it were not for the persuasiveness of Hershey's performance.

With an eye on similar mood enhancement, director Furie relies on the bizarre camerawork that became his distinction in films like THE IPCRESS FILE (1965), but does so much more selectively here, making the angles more radical as the threat increases. The end result of all this is a series of terrifyingly credible scenes; nearly all the attack scenes work.

DeFelitta, however, effectively condenses the background of the main character: Hershey reveals the truth to a psychiatrist in one session

about her mildly incestuous father; her early marriage at the age of 16 to a boy who was soon killed; her second marriage to a father-like figure; and her present on-again, off-again relationship with Jerry (Alex Rocco). These revelations inject just the right amount of doubt to make us wonder whether her experiences might not in fact be psychotic hallucinations.

Background is sadly lacking, however, about the nature of the invisible rapist. When Silver asks Hershey why the being has singled her out, she suggests demurely, "Because I guess he finds me attractive." It's vaguely reassuring to think that a creature from a netherworld would hanker after a mortal so delectable as Hershey in the same lustful vein as the rest of us red-blooded males. Still, his style isn't exactly standard enough to be passed off quite so off-handedly; we need to know more about him.

Even after listening to the gobbledygook from the parapsychologists, we remain baffled as to why this bundle of lecherous energy has stumbled into this dimension in the first place. Although we hardly need a complete picture, some hint of its monstrous configuration seems mandatory—if not to concretize the horror we're supposed to share with the victim, then to

give us a better notion of its origins. Even FORBIDDEN PLANET, after all, showed a vivid outline of its chimera.

Curiously, the entity seems more real in DeFelitta's novel. For instance, Carolotta Moran reports visual details about his exotic, demonic face, and he speaks to her in the crude language we've come to expect of such troublesome fiends.

This failure to satisfy cinematic potential is evident as well in one of the most startling scenes: As Hershey waits alone in what she considers the sanctuary of her friend's house, the door and windows suddenly burst open all around her. The friend returns just in time to confirm the reality of the telekinetic destruction—but that's where it all ends. Hershey isn't even touched by the apparently rampaging demon. We've come to expect a good deal more from him by this point than a senseless temper tantrum.

The film's most visible weakness, however, appears in the concluding plot contrivances that are supposed to bring Hershey's character some relief from the peril of the invisible. As in the book, Carolotta runs into a couple of parapsychology students

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How makeup expert Stan Winston solved an unusual effects problem on THE ENTITY

The nude, headless body of Barbara Hershey hangs from the wall of Stan Winston's Northridge studio (1). Makeup expert Winston created the seamless, articulated false body for THE ENTITY for a scene where the actress is raped on-camera by an invisible attacker.

Sonny Burman and Bob Williams worked from Winston's concept to design and build a 180 degree flip table to facilitate the casting of Hershey's body in an alginate mold. Hershey lay on her back as an impression of the ventral side of her body—neck to toe—was made (2). The mixing and spatulating of the quick-setting alginate was performed by Winston and his crew: Jim Kagel,

Michiko Tagawa, John Goodwin, Jill Rockow, and Bob Schiffer. Dick Smith observed and gave moral support.

When Hershey was fully covered with alginate, a protective foam pad was lowered over her, followed by a table-sized plate which connected to the table frame with heavy pins. What Winston had created, in effect, was a Barbara Hershey sandwich (3, Smith, Schiffer). The entire unit was then flipped 180 degrees (4). Hershey, on her stomach, was carefully lifted up and out (5, Tagawa, Rockow, Goodwin, Winston, Schiffer, Kagel).

The mold's shape was maintained with a backing of plaster bandages. Smooth-on polyurethane was

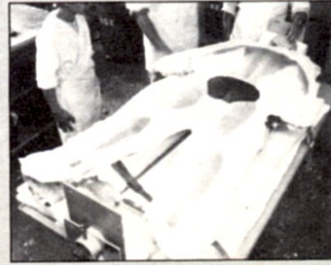
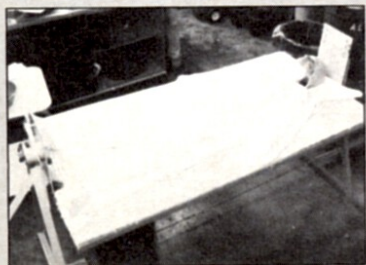
poured and injected into the mold. The body's undershell was fiberglass. A multi-piece core allowed the body to be hollow where necessary. The chest cavity held breathing bags, while movement of limbs and hips was controlled by armatures and push-rods. For the shot, the only part of Hershey that was visible was her head; her body was on a slantboard that ran beneath the elevated bed. Winston was directly beneath Hershey with his arms coming up on either side. Six technicians who operated various push rods and bladders also shared the cramped space.

The false breasts were filled with glycerine bags designed to suggest

proper weight and density. Inside the breast molds were conical inserts that were dotted with finger-like indentations. The indentations were connected with strings to gloves worn by Winston. When he kneaded the air with his fingers, the false breasts were kneaded. The effect was heightened by a rod which Winston used to manipulate the false nipples. He kept tabs on the progress of the entire sequence by watching a hidden video monitor.

Winston's involvement with Sidney J. Furie's THE ENTITY lasted ten weeks, from March of 1981. Barbara Hershey, Winston reports, "took the effects work very well."

David J. Hogan





A flashback of Catherine Deneuve as the immortal Miriam in ancient Egypt.

Too stylized for its own good, this vampire film lacks bite

THE HUNGER

An MGM/UA release, 1-83, 97 mins. Directed by Tony Scott. Produced by Richard Sheperd. Screenplay, Ivan Davis, Michael Thomas. Based on the novel by Whitley Strieber. Cinematographer, Stephen Goldblatt. Editor, Pamela Power. Music, Michel Rubini, Denny Jaeger. Sound, Clive Winter, John Bolz. Art director, Clinton Cavers, Vicky Paul. Make-up illusions, Dick Smith, Carl Fullerton.

Miriam Blaylock Catherine Deneuve
 John Blaylock David Bowie
 Dr. Sarah Roberts Susan Sarandon
 Tom Haver Cliff De Young
 Alice Cavender Beth Ehlers
 Lt. Allegranza Dan Hedaya
 Ron James Aubrey

If you could take a piece of chamber music and change it into a horror film, it would resemble Tony Scott's *THE HUNGER*. Based on Whitley Strieber's sensuous novel of the same name, the film is an intriguing but empty yarn, another twist on the ancient vampire legends, which offers a rational explanation for the creature's existence. The film's protagonist, Miriam Blaylock, is the last of her species, an immortal but still vulnerable breed.

The film is one of the tightest genre pieces to come along in a while, which unfortunately is not to its credit. *THE HUNGER* follows such a rigorously linear narrative path, that it misses the character touches that could have given it depth and life. Familiarization with the novel will no doubt help flesh out the characters, but it'll also dampen the little suspense the film manages to muster.

Like the main characters, the victims aren't well developed, either; they're merely film props. We don't get to know or care about them, except the young girl, Alice (Beth Ehlers) who practices with the Blaylocks in their afternoon musical interludes.

David Bowie, on the other hand, projects a bit more life as John Blaylock, Miriam's doomed lover of the last few centuries. Bowie is on screen in his normal appearance for only a few minutes before he begins to age

and Dick Smith's makeup takes over. Director Scott keeps the story taut by using John Blaylock's deterioration to introduce Sarah Roberts (Susan Sarandon), a noted researcher in age retardation.

When Blaylock goes to Dr. Roberts for help, she disregards him as a crank. After realizing her mistake, however, Roberts visits the Blaylock home, where she falls into the spell (and bed) of Miriam. Sarandon, the plucky, sexy talent of Louis Malle's *PRETTY BABY* and *ATLANTIC CITY*, creates the most sparks—she is by far the most dynamic member of the cast. But Catherine Deneuve—looking remarkably ageless and beautiful—is a bit too vapid as the vampire. There is so little for her to do that she quickly resembles a mannequin going through the motions of high-gloss horror.

Without doubt, the film is too stylized for its own good: entering the Blaylock mansion is like walking into a lifeless, soft focus dream. Mist curls around the furniture, diffused light seeps through the windows, and the curtains flow gently in an undefined breeze. The atmosphere is so mellow, so languid that even a grisly blood-drenched scene between Miriam and Sarah becomes too detached to be shocking.

The painstaking efforts of Dick Smith and Carl Fullerton on the "makeup illusions" are, for the most part, wasted. Bowie's old age makeup is effective, but the resurrection of the lovers and Miriam's demise should have been (but aren't) the highlight of the film. Miriam's death is filmed in a slow motion technique which negates Dick Smith's work.

Ultimately *THE HUNGER* is an interesting, albeit shallow, parlor room horror film in which the filmmakers emphasize texture over substance with less-than-successful results.

Dan Scapperotti

Monty Python really should do something, somewhat different

MONTY PYTHON'S THE MEANING OF LIFE

A Universal release, 3-83, 103 mins. In color. Directed by Terry Jones. Written by Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin. Produced by John Goldstone. Director of Animation, Terry Gilliam. Cinematographer, Peter Hannan. Editor, Julian Doyle. Production design, Harry Lange. Special Effects Supervisor, George Gibbs. Sound, Garth Marshall.

Cast: Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin, Carol Cleveland, Judy Lor, Simon Jones, Andrew MacLachlan, Valerie Whittington, Patricia Quinn, Mark Holmes.

And now for something not so completely different. The Pythons last gave us *LIFE OF BRIAN*, which set their no-holds-barred humor within the format of an actual story line.

Now they've gone back to their "roots." Their latest film, *THE MEANING OF LIFE*, takes its form from the original *MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS* television series, a potpourri of skits with different settings in time and space, different atmospheres and paces, all tied together in the loosest of ways. The resulting film thus becomes more easily judged for its parts, but unlike, say a *FANTASIA*, *THE MEANING OF LIFE* just doesn't add up. An unevenness in quality makes this film equal to an average *FLYING CIRCUS* episode: the whole lacks the added style, refinement, and pointedness to succeed as a feature film.

LIFE OF BRIAN must bear part of the responsibility for it succeeded in these areas and thus raised expectations for *THE MEANING OF LIFE*. Visually, their last film maintained a unique and consistent style of rag-tag dry dinginess. However, *THE MEANING OF LIFE*'s likeable but rather standard art direction suffers in part from the film's varied settings, which compounded the problems of budget and energy expenditure and destroyed any possibility of an overall style.

More importantly, *LIFE OF BRIAN* set an example for coherence of theme: "You don't need to follow me," Brian shouts. "You don't need to follow anybody. You're all individuals." "Yes, we're all individuals," the crowd calls back in unison, repeating with reverence, but without understanding, the words of their unwilling Messiah.

LIFE OF BRIAN's thematic content, far from weighing down the film's humor, lives through it. No where do the Python's stop and lecture; any "message" sent is sent through comedy. This successful cohesion sets up expectations for their next film, especially once the title became known: *THE MEANING OF LIFE*. Here, the Python troupe would combine their suc-

cessful television skit format with the thematic focus of their last feature film and do a penetrating *tour de force* upon the various philosophies and reasonings people use to cope with the great galactic unknowns. Would. Could. Should. Didn't.

The film starts off with promise: Part I, *The Miracle of Birth*. A poverty-stricken, kid-ridden Catholic laments having to sell his offspring, who join him in a rousing musical number entitled "Every Sperm is Sacred." For this scene alone, *THE MEANING OF LIFE* deserves immortality. Good performances, design and writing, combine with possibly offensive and definitely unconventional subject matter (who else would have a gaggle of children descanting about semen) and a satirical target (a church's dogma which has no relationship to the realities of life)—all the best elements of a Python skit assemble here.

One more sketch, much shorter and less ornate, brings all of these elements together too: a waiter, leading the camera on with coaxing whispers, travels on and on with promises of a great revelation. Finally, at his boyhood home, he explains how his mother once told him "The world is a beautiful place. Love everyone. Bring peace and contentment everywhere you go." It's not much of a philosophy, but, well—fuck you, I live life in my own way." That's the meaning of life. Unfortunately, few other sketches deal with the theme which has given the film its title.

However, some segments offered potential. The heavy-set restaurant patron could have served as a pointed attack upon the pursuit of sensual pleasure, and the sergeant-major

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Pythonite Terry Jones (inset) as Mr. Creasote, the film's hysterical vomiter, in makeup by Christopher Tucker.



MONTY PYTHON

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who marches up and down the square could have been an example of aimless human activity as a preventative measure against philosophical thought; the old piratical anti-corporate greasers who pop up now and then could have wrapped up the film by establishing, with a dollop of Pythonian goofiness, a utopia based upon mutual kindness—all with a tad of rewriting. To quote a Clessian fish, "They haven't said much about the meaning of life so far." The problem is the Python troupe did not sit down to write a film about the meaning of life, but rather chose this as a nifty title to put over their collection of skits.

But wait! There's more to the Monty Python films than intellectual content. How about humor? Many bits, having little or nothing to do with the meaning of life, or any other satirical target *are* funny. The Pythons play with manners and attitudes within differing social contexts, get laughs with absurdity for absurdity's sake, succeed in making the grotesque hilarious, and offer refreshingly imaginative special effects, from a life-like human suit with zipper to an office building moving out under full sail. But despite these moments of comic ingenuity, *THE MEANING OF LIFE* rates only mild chuckles on a guffaw scale.

Expectations cause a lot of trouble here. From another group, *THE MEANING OF LIFE* might be a refreshing comedy, but the Python troupe can do so much more. *THE LIFE OF BRIAN* proved their ability to combine humor and "message." The film's utilization of a central force seems to have also inspired the Pythons to better writing; *THE LIFE OF BRIAN* has its lulls but, on the whole, it is a funnier film than *THE MEANING OF LIFE*. Rare, big-screen appearances require better than the ups and downs of a multi-pieced television show; they deserve more honing and careful craftsmanship. The Monty Python troupe should really do something, somewhat different. *Allen Malmquist*

Terry Jones, in one of the film's zany sight gags, plays "Find the Fish."



Optical and miniature effects by John Dykstra's Apogee company.

TV thinks science fiction is just AIRPORT set in the future

STARFLIGHT: THE PLANE THAT COULDN'T LAND

An ABC Sunday Night Movie, 2:30, 150 mins. Directed by Jerry Jameson. Produced by Arnold Orgolini, Peter Nelson. Screenplay, Robert Malcolm Young, Peter Brooke, Gene Warren. Cinematographer, Hector Figueroa. Editor, John F. Link. Music, Lalo Schifrin. Sound, Bud Alper. Special effects, John Dykstra. Art Director, Stephen Dane.

Pilot Lee Majors
Newscaster Robert Webber
Publicity Agent Lauren Hutton
Pilot's wife Tess Harper
Designer Hal Linden
Co-pilot Kirk Scott
Newspaper editor Jocelyn Brando

ABC's dreary, 3-hour Sunday Night Movie, *STARFLIGHT: THE PLANE THAT COULDN'T LAND*, was viewed with an acute sense of disappointment, not just for the film itself, but for chances missed for good science fiction. For, despite the potential of the genre, it has been years since television has produced anything that even minimally explores it.

STARFLIGHT, for its part, was one of those awful *AIRPORT*-type clunkers in which a swollen cast of undistinguished actors is finally done in by a deadly script. The plot this time—not that it mattered much—had our cast marooned in space after a "hypersonic" airplane is accidentally thrown into orbit. The vital questions and conflicts were mostly technological: Will a crucial valve work?; how long will the air last?; can the heroine's fake lashes stay on in freefall?

The same spirit and imagination that went into the script, is demonstrated again in the performances. Pilot Lee Majors gives another of his minimalist portraits, undoubtedly based on the concept that silence suggests strength. The deliberate underplaying that works rather well

in his television series, *THE FALL GUY*, comes off apathetic and anemic here.

As for his girlfriend, Lauren Hutton is little more than a tool, shamelessly used like background scenery, usually draped across Majors' shoulders like a sweater. Hal Linden plays the hapless designer of the plane with some credibility if not inspiration, as he hysterically tries to find a way to get *Starflight One* back to earth (and salvage some scraps of professionalism).

Special effects are no solution for a film with this few redeeming qualities, but sometimes they can make the experience endurable. Even here, potential inventiveness was repeatedly thwarted by the odd, uneven way in which the effects were used. They simply weren't seen most of the time.

The effects themselves, by the famed John Dykstra (*STAR WARS*), were interesting enough: a sleek shiny *Starflight One*, the hypersonic plane; realistic Space Shuttles; a spectacular explosion of a flexible escape tunnel between the two crafts—all set against a glowing, blue-green Earth.

Yet, the overall effect was as static and lifeless as the rest of the film. Because the camera rarely moved, all those expensive effects began to look more like a painted backdrop. Director Jerry Jameson bottled up the film so much in the claustrophobic cabin of *Starflight One*—where the characters, goodness knows, were doing nothing of consequence—that one longed to get out as much as they did. When it wasn't stranded in the tight confines of the plane, the film was in the equally uninteresting control room on Earth, where some incomprehensible agonizing over corporate

continued on page 60

John Dykstra adds NASA-like reality to outer space effects

Special effects for *STARFLIGHT* were created by John Dykstra (*STAR WARS*) and his Apogee company. Although readily admitting the plot elements were "totally indefensible in terms of scientific facts," Dykstra was enthusiastic about the film's credible space scenes.

"It's some of the first stuff we've done that tries to make space look like space, based on actual NASA footage that we looked at," Dykstra said. "There are no stars in the NASA films, however, but I had to put them in because the filmmakers wanted them."

Dykstra used actual NASA footage for background shots of the hazy disk of earth behind the orbiting craft. Models from Rockwell were used for the space shuttles, while Dykstra's studio built models of the *Star Flight* from designs by production designer David S. Snyder. A new reverse bluescreen matting process with special phosphor paints (a process Dykstra recently patented) enabled him to use shiny, metallic-looking models for a more realistic appearance.

Dykstra also found a way to simulate computer animation for video screen readouts at low cost. Rather than using the time-consuming process of programming a shape into a computer and manipulating it with instructions, Dykstra built a wire frame model manipulated by strings. The model is filmed, and the film is projected onto the computer screen in the scene being shot.

The puppet work for the impressive scenes of passengers being transferred in orbit from one ship to another was a source of particular satisfaction for Dykstra. "Of course, we'd use puppets before, but never real marionettes," Dykstra said. "John Brunner, an accomplished puppeteer, worked with us. He developed and built the armatures which we covered with special rubber skins we designed. It was some very nice stuff."

Charlotte Wolter

Badham's film demonstrates a callous disregard for human life

BLUE THUNDER

A Columbia release, 4/83, 110 mins. In color. Dolby stereo. Directed by John Badham. Produced by Gordon Carroll. Written by Dan O'Bannon and Don Jakob. Executive producers, Phil Feldman and Andrew Fogelson. Cinematographer, John A. Alonzo. Editor, Frank Morriss and Edward Abrams. Art director, Sydney Z. Litwack. Special effects, Jeff Jarvis. Music, Arthur B. Rubinstein. Visual consultant, Phillip Harrison.

Murphy Roy Scheider
Cochrane Malcolm McDowell
Braddock Warren Oates
Kate Candy Clark
Lymangood Daniel Stern

their new toy.

The ship is also handy for eavesdropping upon a group of cold politicians and military men who plan to stir up trouble in the Los Angeles barrio in order to demonstrate the copter's suitability for riot control. Villainous Colonel Cochrane (Malcolm McDowell) spots the hovering machine and the chase is on. Soon the skies over L.A. are choked with SWAT helicopters whose marksmen heedlessly fire upon Blue Thunder, apparently intent upon bringing it down on the heads of innocent civilians.

The picture bloats with its callous disregard for human life. When Scheider turns his 20 mm cannon on police cars and cuts them in half, the audience enjoys another hearty guffaw. No matter that the officers may be injured or dying. Later, a ghetto barbeque joint packed with customers is blown to smithereens. A few people run from the building before the sudden attack, but how many inside are killed? We don't know because Badham—who is busy going for another cheap laugh with a literal rain of fried chickens—doesn't care. The approach is doubly insulting because it implies that *we* don't care, either. The fact that the film's anonymous victims are "undesirables"—Hispanics, blacks, women, policemen—is less disagreeable than the sociopathic suggestion that if you don't know someone it doesn't matter if they die. BLUE THUNDER tells us that strangers don't matter.

The only human being on view is the young cop Lymangood. Daniel Stern, with his elastic body and wry, expressive face, avoids stereotyping and manages to connect with the audience. Lymangood reacts believa-

bly to danger and exhibits loyalty, wit and bravery. We come to like him and enjoy his presence. But Badham exploits our interest by placing the young man in terrible jeopardy. This would be dramatically legitimate if every other element of the movie were not so unfeeling. In Badham's hands, Lymangood becomes a mere device, a stimulus designed to turn us into Pavlovian pups.

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In a technical sense, BLUE THUNDER is nearly flawless. Badham and ace cinematographer John A. Alonzo have created nighttime

images of Los Angeles that have all the luminescence and tacky immediacy of a black velvet painting. Camerawork is aggressive and rhythmic; motion control effects during the jet sequences are very good and the explosions and car crashes are energetically staged. Some of the set pieces are exhilarating, like a marvelous telephoto shot of the copter suddenly rising above a crowded bridge like a voracious black insect. And Arthur B. Rubinstein's score is as glossy and hard-edged as Badham's images.

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Badham's film demonstrates a callous disregard for human life

BLUE THUNDER

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Murphy Roy Scheider
Cochrane Malcolm McDowell
Braddock Warren Oates
Kate Candy Clark
Lymangood Daniel Stern

When missiles fired from an Air Force jet miss Roy Scheider's helicopter in BLUE THUNDER and detonate against a skyscraper instead, the audience cheers. Ha Ha! Our hero has outwitted the bad guys. But what about the unseen people who are inside the ruined building? But nothing. BLUE THUNDER cares more about its glitzy hardware than about the people who are victimized by it. Although John Badham is credited as the film's director, choreographer or manipulator might be more apt terms. His movie—brilliantly staged and more galvanizing than a hypo of adrenalin—is as cold and calculated as a printed circuit. BLUE THUNDER is the ultimate video game, an aphrodisiac for the empty-eyed children of the computer age.

The title is not a weather condition but a sophisticated police helicopter: black, armored, and equipped with a 20mm cannon that fires 4000 rounds a minute. It is also a spy ship capable of engaging its "Whisper Mode" and zoom cameras to silently examine a woman's cleavage from 500 feet, or peep on a nude contortionist. Police pilot Murphy (Scheider) and his young observer Lymangood (Daniel Stern) chuckle and snort as they explore the libidinous possibilities of

their new toy.

The ship is also handy for eavesdropping upon a group of cold politicians and military men who plan to stir up trouble in the Los Angeles barrio in order to demonstrate the copter's suitability for riot control. Villainous Colonel Cochrane (Malcolm McDowell) spots the hovering machine and the chase is on. Soon the skies over L.A. are choked with SWAT helicopters whose marksmen heedlessly fire upon Blue Thunder, apparently intent upon bringing it down on the heads of innocent civilians.

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It's got zip, wit and vitality. It's too bad it got cancelled.

WIZARDS AND WARRIORS

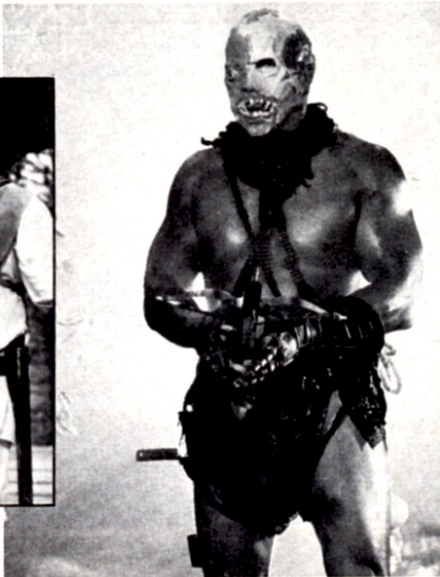
CBS-TV series, 2 26 83, 50 mins. In color. Directed by Bill Bixby. Produced by Bill Richmond, Robert Earl. Screenplay by Bill Richmond. Executive producers, Don Reo, Judith D. Allison. Cinematographer, Richard Glouner. Editor, Housley Stevenson. Production design, Peter Wooley. Sound, Bud Maffett. Music, Lee Holdridge.

Prince Erik Jeff Conaway
Princess Ariel Julia Duffy
Prince Dirk Duncan Regehr
Marko Walter Olkewicz
Geoffrey Tim Dunigan

Below: Jeff Conaway as Greystone and Walter Olkewicz as Marko Herpe.



Right: Steven Strong as the Bonecrack Demon, one of the show's fantasy enemies.



WIZARDS AND WARRIORS is a surprise. It's hip, bright, fun—and certainly destined for cancellation.

The "lance and lasers" fantasy adventure series now on CBS is the most expensive ever attempted by the network (\$8 million for eight episodes). The brainchild of television producer/writer Don Reo, an 11-year veteran of comedy shows, the series was pitched to network executives as "Butch Cassidy and Sundance in Camelot" (see sidebar, below).

The show puts characters with contemporary sensibilities into a semi-medieval setting. The princess, for instance, is a princess in every sense of the word; absolutely spoiled rotten. She is the type who's unaware of gravity because she has a handmaiden to catch anything before it hits the ground.

The show is television's latest attempt at an all-purpose fantasy-adventure series that can pull in both kid and adult audiences. Set in the

mythical world of Camarand, millions of years in the future when technology as we know it has become something that only wizards can understand, the show centers on the ongoing battle of good guy/prince Erik Greystone (Jeff Conaway) to stop nasty prince Dirk Blackpool (Duncan Regehr) from conquering the world and redoing it in black leather; it's a different sort of comedy/adventure series. One-liners zip by, with the slightly wacked-out feeling of an American Monty Python effort. However, the television format binds in spots; too many segments build up to a menace that is quickly dispatched after the commercial.

Walter Olkewicz as Marko the hero's comic sidekick, grew into his part as the series progressed. Olkewicz's background includes improvisational comedy, and there is some-

thing akin to the quick vitality of John Belushi in his performance. Veteran actor Clive Revill warms to the task of renegade wizard Vector and creates the oiliest TV villain since Jonathan Harris in *LOST IN SPACE*. And Randi Brooks as seductive witch Bethel, dressed in a silver halter top, matching loincloth and little else, could enduce rot in a statue.

A bit of interesting casting is Duncan Regehr as the epic villain Dirk Blackpool. Regehr, a handsome but relative unknown, received his training as a Stratford Shakespearean actor and was originally offered the lead in the series. Regehr chose to do the villain instead, and developed the role of Blackpool working closely with series creator and executive producer Don Reo. Working closely with actors on script rewrites was a technique Reo found to be extremely successful during his tenure on *MASH*.

The special effects are quite good for television. The magic "monocles" of the wizards don't just hang like costume jewelry, but occasionally throb with blue energy to underscore a point about their power. However, impressive set decoration by art director Baela Neel is all but wasted on the tiny TV-sized screen; ornate tables and heavy woods with elaborate carvings can barely be glimpsed as background pieces. The costumes by Oscar-award winning designer Theadora Van Runkle are opulent and rich with colors and textures rarely seen in a network series.

A bit awkward at first, the show gained confidence as writers and the public became familiar with the characters. (CBS showed the pilot in its third week, frontloading some of the better, later episodes.) No doubt, *WIZARDS AND WARRIORS* is tame stuff compared to the blood-and-thunder of feature films, but the monsters are still on hand for the kids and the jokes are aimed at an adult audience. What the show lacks in originality, it easily makes up for in zip and vitality.

Mike Mayo

ENTITY

continued from page 56

who don't believe her story, and she then entices them to her house to see for themselves. Well, they do—far too fast and much too easily. Why should the demon now want to be discovered, and again not attempt to manhandle his victim with others present?

The most contrived sequence of all is the supposed climax. The parapsychologists construct a duplicate of her home in the university gym, with the intention of freezing the being with liquid helium (and seeing if he's a tangible manifestation). Although apparently based on an actual experiment performed on the real Carolotta, the whole thing strains credibility. How could anyone freeze an already frigid creature whose presence brings temperatures down enough so we see Hershey's breath.

In the final analysis, though, the focus of the film seems a bit different than the novel. At the end of the book Carolotta is finally committed to an asylum. In the film she comes to terms with her curse by accepting it fearlessly when the creature confronts her one last time in her house; but the ending titles explain that the real Carolotta moved away to Texas where the attacks—less intense and more infrequent—continue. A chilling thought—but one that would have been more so had the film treatment lived up to all that it promised.

Then again, can anyone remember a strip-tease that ever really did that?

Steven Dimeo

STARFLIGHT

continued from page 58

pride was going on. Confined and cramped, the film just didn't fly.

As an example of the opportunities continually missed, when the rescued plane finally roared to a safe landing, all the viewer saw was a second or two of engine flames in a black sky. No gradual approach of landing lights, no growing shape of the plane. It was over so fast that it was never entirely clear that the plane had landed successfully at all. It was another dramatic, as well as effects, opportunity missed.

What kept *STARFLIGHT* from ever getting off the ground is a television mentality that believes that a few special effects spliced into a *DALLAS* story line constitutes science fiction. Of course, not everything that is produced for television can be as incontinent as an Arthur C. Clarke story. But, it is particularly reprehensible when nothing is even attempted beyond a cosmetic, pseudo-science fiction veneer over one of the oldest chestnuts in filmmaking.

Maybe the Trekkies are guilty of some excess in their worship of their pointy-eared hero. But, watching *STARFLIGHT*, I found myself becoming very nostalgic for those times, when someone who understood and valued science fiction made an honest attempt to put it on television. We are all a lot poorer without it.

Charlotte Wolter

Laughtrack fails to help Sword & Sorcery

Selling the idea of *WIZARDS AND WARRIORS* to the networks turned out to be a difficult chore. Even though writer/producer Don Reo worked on some of the most successful comedy shows in television, including *MASH*, *RHODA*, *ALL IN THE FAMILY*, *LAUGH-IN* and *THE MARY TYLER*



Don Reo

MOORE SHOW, the networks were leery of an expensive fantasy series. Reo convinced them that *GREYSTONE'S ODYSSEY*, as the show was originally named, was not going to be another *CONAN*.

"I think the problem that most people have with fantasy is that so much of it is very grim," said Reo, who got the idea for the show when his kids introduced him to *Dungeons and Dragons*. "I've gone to see films like *EXCALIBUR*, *CONAN* and *CLASH OF THE TITANS*, and those pictures were really somber. There just were not any lead characters that had a

sense of humor, and when they tried it on NBC with *FUGITIVE FROM THE EMPIRE*, the show was so grim and boring that I was lost after the first five minutes."

CBS supported *WIZARDS AND WARRIORS* with a massive advertising campaign. The show needed to suc-

ceed in the ratings by the fourth or fifth episode for the network to renew it for production in the fall. Four weeks just wasn't enough time for the show to catch on with the viewers. The ratings weren't big enough to justify the show's high production costs, though there is still a slight chance that after *WIZARDS AND WARRIORS'* full eight-week run, it could be picked up as a mid-season replacement next year.

Said Reo, justifiably proud of the show, "It's always a crapshoot."

Mike Mayo

FILM RATINGS

BRITANNIA HOSPITAL

With Leonard Rossiter, Graham Crowden, Malcolm McDowell, Joan Plowright.

This black comedy about class warfare is set in a British hospital during a union strike on a day royalty is due to visit. Intermeshed among the many subplots is that of a mad scientist, played terrifically by Graham Crowden, who has had some practice with this role. He puts together a creature out of the body parts he gloats over in a ghoulish, refrigerated room. Makeup effects by Nick Maley are OK; even a brief gore scene is played for laughs. ● JPH

CURTAINS

Directed by Jonathan Stryker. Jensen-Farley Pictures. 3/83, 89 mins. With: Samantha Eggar, Linda Thorson, John Vernon.

Lugubrious, far-fetched nonsense about a group of actresses who are knocked off one by one at an isolated estate. The illogic and stupidity of the screenplay are beyond belief. Linda Thorson (THE AVENGERS) adds elegance and a touch of class, but it ain't enough. ○ David J. Hogan

THE DEADLY SPAWN

Directed by Douglas McKeown. 21st Century. 4/83, 77 mins. With: Charles George Hildebrandt, Tom De Franco.

Good monsters, bad film. A meteor deposits a voracious life-form on earth. The babies look like tadpoles; the big mama, which has three heads, is all teeth. Only 10-year-old Charles George Hildebrandt is smart enough to figure out that these eyeless horrors are attracted by sound. The ending is marred by obvious miniatures credited to his father, artist Tim Hildebrandt. The pacing and editing betray signs of an on-again, off-again production schedule, while the photography is just terrible, including out-of-focus credits. Too bad the hungry monsters by stop-motion animator John Dods couldn't have been given a better vehicle. ● JPH

THE DEMON MURDER CASE

With: Kevin Bacon, Andy Griffith, Cloris Leachman, Eddie Albert.

This Dick Clark produced TV-movie is so devoid of pace, confrontation, plot development, point of view and climax that one would almost believe it was taken from a dull, true life story. Maybe that's why NBC ran a disclaimer at the beginning, labeling it a fictional dramatization. ○ JPH

A young boy is possessed and undergoes an exorcism in the first half of the film, while the second half focuses on the murder trial of his older brother, who uses satanic possession as a defense. A dismal bore, with third-rate effects. ○ DS

THE HORROR OF IT ALL

Narrated by Jose Ferrer.

An infuriating attempt to summarize the horror genre (in one hour!) by using clips from public domain movies, and familiar stills from the big stuff. Who is Gene Feldman, and how did he

FILM TITLE	●●●●		●●●		●●		●		○			
	MUST SEE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	MEDIOCRE	WORTHLESS	FSC	KC	JPH	MJK	BK	MM	DS
AIRPLANE II: THE SEQUEL / Ken Finkleman Paramount, 12/82, 86 mins.						●	●	●●	●	●	●●	●●●
ATOR / David Hills Comworld Pictures, 3/83, 100 mins.						○				○	○	
BLUE THUNDER / John Badham Columbia, 5/83, 108 mins.		●●●●						●	●●●●		●●	●●●
BRITANNIA HOSPITAL / Lindsay Anderson UA Classics, 3/83, 116 mins.								●	●	●●●		●
CREEPSHOW / George Romero Warner Bros, 11/82, 122 mins.		●●●●	●●	●●	●●	●●●●	●●		○	○	●●●	●●
CRY FOR THE STRANGERS / Peter Medak CBS-TV, 12/82, 100 mins.							○	○		●		●
THE DARK CRYSTAL / Jim Henson, Frank Oz Universal, 12/82, 94 mins.		●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●
THE DEMON MURDER CASE / Billy Hale NBC-TV, 3/83, 100 mins.							●	○		●		○
THE ENTITY / Sidney J. Furie 20th Century-Fox, 2/83, 105 mins.		●●●	●●	●●	●●	●●●	●●	●●	○	○	●●●	●
FRAGGLE ROCK / Jim Henson, others. HBO Cable Network, 2/83, 26-minute episodes								●●●	●	●●		●
THE HORROR OF IT ALL / Gene Feldman PBS-TV, 2/83, 60 mins.								●		●●		●
HORROR PLANET / Norman J. Warren Almi Cinema Five Films, 11/82, 85 mins.			○			○		●	○	●		●●
THE HUNGER / Tony Scott MGM-UA, 4/83, 97 mins.		●●●●	●			●●●	●	●●●	●	●		●●
THE INVISIBLE WOMAN / Alan J. Levi NBC-TV, 2/83, 100 mins.							○		●	○		○
KISS ME GOODBYE / Robert Mulligan 20th Century-Fox, 12/82, 101 mins.		●●●				●●●		○	●●	○		
THE LAST UNICORN / A. Rankin & J. Bass Jensen Farley Pictures, 11/82, 84 mins.			●	●●●	●●	●		●		●		●
MONTY PYTHON'S MEANING OF LIFE Terry Jones, Universal, 4/83, 103 mins.		●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
ONE DARK NIGHT / Tom McLaughlin Comworld Pictures, 2/83, 87 mins.			●	●	●●							●
RETURN OF THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E. / Ray Austin CBS-TV, 4/83, 100 mins.							○	○			●●	●●
SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES Jack Clayton, Buena Vista, 4/83, 94 mins.		●●				●●●		●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
TIME RIDER / William Dear Jensen Farley Pictures, 2/83, 93 mins.							●●		●●	○	●●	●
TIME WALKER / Tom Kennedy New World Pictures, 11/83, 83 mins.			○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●●
TREASURE OF THE FOUR CROWNS / Ferdinando Baldi, Cannon, 1/83, 99 mins. 3-D.						○		●		●	●●	●
TRICK OR TREATS / Gary Graver Lone Star Pictures, 12/82, 91 mins.			○	○	○						●●	●
VIDEODROME / David Cronenberg Universal, 2/83, 88 mins.		●●●	●	●●	●	●●●		●				●
WIZARDS & WARRIORS / Bill Bixby, others CBS-TV, 2/83, 50-minute episodes.							●	●	●●	●	●●●	●●●

FSC/Frederick S. Clarke KC/Kyle Counts JPH/Judith P. Harris MJK/Michael J. Kaplan
BK/Bill Kelley MM/Mike Mayo DS/Dan Scapperotti

ever talk PBS into backing this?

○ Tim Lucas

KRULL

Directed by Peter Yates. Columbia Pictures. 7/83, 122 mins. With: Ken Marshall, Freddie Jones, Lysette Anthony.

A joyous, warm, witty and beautiful adventure story only slightly marred by some sub-par optical effects. Ken Marshall is an uncertain King who must save his world from the mysterious Beast and his powerful army of Slayers. Though early gossip had this film pegged as a loser, superb performances, masterful production design, and a luscious score by James Horner make it a real gem. ●●● MJK

1990: THE BRONX WARRIOR

Directed by Enzo G. Castellari. UFD, 3/83, 90 mins. With: Vic Morrow, Fred Williamson, Mark Gregory.

Poor acting, dialogue, continuity and story mar this Italian import, filmed, in part, on location in the slums of New York. In the story, the Bronx has been abandoned by law enforcement and warrior gangs vie for control. A plot by the powerful Manhattan Corporation sends Hammer (Vic Morrow), a ruthless cop, to the borough with devastating results. Violent, but juvenile, the film is loaded with unintentional laughs. ● DS

ONE DARK NIGHT

With: Meg Tilly, Robin Evans, Leslie Speights, Elizabeth Daily.

An above-average example of the usually rank teenage horror subgenre: supernatural hazing. As an initiation prank, a girl must spend the night in a mausoleum which houses the corpse of a psychic able to animate dead bodies, apparently including his own. The corpses, courtesy of The Burman Studio, are a nice touch, but basically they look like what they are—dummies being dragged around. However, the ending does contain some nice decomposition effects. ●● JPH

PIRANHA II: THE SPAWNING

Directed by James Cameron. Saturn International, 3/83, 78 mins. With: Tricia O'Neill, Steve Marachuk.

Less a sequel than a remake, this Jamaican bloodbath adds flying fish to the premise of the overrated 1978 original. ○ BK

THE RETURN OF THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E.

With: Robert Vaughn, David McCallum, Patrick Macnee, George Latzenby, Anthony Zerbe.

The greatest charm of the original series (1964-68) was its tongue-in-cheek humor and the sarcasm between Solo and Kuryakin. But these are completely missing from this TV movie. It takes 47 minutes to reunite Vaughn and McCallum, and once they have teamed up they are almost immediately separated. The action is pedestrian, the humor strained, the dialogue forgettable and much of the acting embarrassing. Anthony Zerbe, a fine actor, is given little to do as the villain—a fatal flaw. ○ JPH

SPECIAL BULLETIN

Directed by Marshall Herkovitz. NBC-TV, 5/83, 106 mins. With: Ed Flanders, Kathryn Walker, David Clennon.

This fictional "docudrama" is probably as chilling and believable a depiction of an accidental nuclear disaster as television is capable of giving us. The writing, performances and concept are all considerably more effective than last season's WORLD WAR III. Even NBC's spineless barrage of disclaimers (for the cretins in the audience who may think what's going on is really happening) do minimal damage to this venture—some and important presentation. ●●● Jordan R. Fox

TIME WALKER

With: Ben Murphy, Nina Axelrod, Kevin Brophy.

A mummy with a heart light is revived thanks to overexposure to X-rays. He's also an alien, and this B.C. E.T. is collecting crystals stolen from his sarcophagus because he wants to (guess what?) phone home. ○ JPH

WIZARDS AND WARRIORS

With: Jeff Conaway, Clive Revill.

Mel Brooks' TV Robin Hood spoof, WHEN THINGS WERE ROTTEN, probably inspired this medieval lampoon. The creative resemblance ends there—witless, technically crude, and so wishily played by a fey cast it looks like a costume revue at a gay bathhouse. ○ BK

XTRO

Directed by Harry Bromely Davenport. New Line Cinema, 3/83, 81 mins. With: Phil Saver, Bernice Stegers.

Well acted but clumsily produced pastiche of ALIEN, E.T., and THE AVENGERS. Dad is kidnapped by aliens, returns, but—omigod!—isn't Dad anymore. Poor editing and substandard special effects undercut many of the sequences. ● David J. Hogan

LETTERS



ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE HE ISN'T:

I received a phone call from none other than Paul Clemens, the target of my last letter [13:4:62]. Being remarkably pleasant for someone I had termed a "moron," Clemens gave me the complete story of his POLTERGEIST lawsuit. Although I may disagree with Clemens on several points, my conversation left me with the impression that he is an okay guy, not a "leech."

Dan Lennon
Point Pleasantboro, New Jersey

SPIELBERG CONTINUES E.T. COVERUP—WHY?

The alien mask Ed Kulasa referred to in his letter [13:4:62] is not the head of Rick Baker's NIGHT SKIES alien, but rather a Steve Johnson creation for the film GALACTIC CONNECTION.

It is a shame that Baker has yet to receive the credit he is due for his incredible NIGHT SKIES creation. It is several years ahead of the "state of

the art" wonders featured in E.T. and THE DARK CRYSTAL.

And I do wish you would stop printing those "artistic conceptions" of the NIGHT SKIES alien. Thus far they have not come close.

Bart J. Mixon
South Houston, Texas

We have it from another, reliable source that our artist's conception of Baker's NIGHT SKIES alien does fail to do it justice. We are unable to confirm Mixon's other observations. Steven Spielberg refuses to give Baker's work the exposure it deserves and let the public decide which E.T. is best.

LET'S GO BACK AND CHECK OUR NOTES

Writer Paul Gagne only *thinks* he's covering the technical side of THE HUNGER [13:4:16] with last-word perfection. It's a case of your authors believing they are experts in materials and techniques they have probably rarely laid their hands on.

Case in point: On page 21, Gagne goes to great lengths to explain Carl Fullerton's method of creating crumbling mummies. He refers to the substance used as "improperly mixed foam latex" and only one paragraph later, the stuff has turned into "polyurethane foam." As a working make-up effects artist, I can tell you the two substances are as far apart chemically as granola and gasoline!

Rick Lazzarini
Marina Del Rey, California

Paul R. Gagne responds: I do not profess to be an expert in the field of makeup. I repeatedly checked facts with Dick Smith and provided him with a copy of the finished article for proofreading. Occasionally mistakes even slip by the experts. My apologies to anyone confused.

JEDI BLUES: LOOSE LIPS SINK SCRIPTS

Without so much as a warning, you coldly, callously insensitively revealed the identity of "The Other" in RETURN OF THE JEDI [13:4:15]. To say I am outraged would be a gross understatement. I think you owe your readers one hell of an apology.

Paul Salscheider
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

How unfortunate that your excellent coverage of film production is occasionally marred by immature mudslinging. A joke or two about Lucas' title change is well deserved, but Teddy-Bears? Come on! Whoever the observer is, who says they're "not very convincing," should be slowly and carefully given a film editing primer. I'm sure a few skewed eyes were observed on THE DARK CRYSTAL stages as well.

Also, your "description" of the plot is such an obvious hash of rumors, it shouldn't even be in print. His moments of indecision included, Lucas opened up the science-fiction film genre and is a top-notch filmmaker.

Kevin Havener
San Francisco, California

I would not have been surprised to see this article in a publication such as *People*, which specializes in scoops at the expense of anyone and anything, or in the *National Enquirer*, with its history of unprincipled journalism. To see this article in your magazine was, to say the very least, dismaying.

You have demonstrated that not only have you no respect for the film product which constitutes your subject matter, you have no respect for the source of your income, your readers. I shall never again purchase any issue of your publication and will, to the best of my ability, attempt to dis-

suade others.

Lastly, it is my sincere hope that Lucasfilm will withdraw from you in all future cooperation, in an attempt to curb your desire to continue such articles.

Judith Lyte
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Lucasfilm has indeed withdrawn all cooperation from this magazine. However, since Lucasfilm's cooperation up to now has been next to nothing that hardly constitutes a punishment.

Criticism and insight are always welcome (at least by this reader), but right now you're only making fools of yourselves.

David Green
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lucas should fire your source. Mr. Clarke should be ashamed of himself ("Sense of Wonder," my ass!), and I will never buy CINEFANTASTIQUE again.

Paul Quyers
Brooklyn, New York

What's the matter with you folks? When will you learn to stop giving us negative previews based on hearsay? Information out before the film is always unreliable, but when it comes from people slimy enough to reveal confidential information, you should be especially wary of it. Why pass judgments before *anyone* has seen the film?

John Schnall
New York, New York

I wonder what Lucas is going to think hearing that someone in the production had to open his big mouth and that you people didn't keep it under your hats?

In the future I hope you people will keep important plot secrets under your hats. Don't act like a bunch of eager beaver reporters when it comes to things like that. Place warnings on top of such "scoops" so that people who love surprises will be warned.

I'm not going to let your scoop bother my enjoyment of the film in any way when it opens, but I wonder how many others who stumbled on your article via its misleading title, are just as upset at reading the big secret?

Michael Gronnon
Detroit, Michigan

The title of our article was "Revenge vs. Return of the Jedi: Star Wars creator George Lucas finally decided his title didn't make sense after all." Since the thrust of the article was to expose the reasons behind the film's highly unconventional title change, the article's title is both accurate and appropriate. Our aim was to inform, not mislead.

Lucasfilm, on the other hand, has stated that their intent behind the title change was precisely to mislead (see editorial, page 3). That's news, and we

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New York, NY 10012.

IT'S BACK! CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT NO. 4 Reviews: Superman 3, Bond-007, Star Wars 3. Information: Send SASE. COTN-CFQ, 7540 Village Dr, Prairie Valley, KS 66208

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reported it. In doing so it was necessary to discuss the plot details Lucasfilm were so haphazardly trying to keep secret. The odd nature of their coverup called attention to the very information they sought to hide.

We regret if our article lessened anyone's enjoyment of the film. And we hope that those upset by the article's revelations won't overlook the serious implications we raised about the film's bizarre title change and the mentality that spawned it.

DON'T BITE THOSE HANDS THAT FEED

For all your blurbs and snipes about Spielberg and Lucas, gentleman, it would do you well to keep two things in mind. First, had it not been for CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND and STAR WARS in 1977, many of today's genre films would otherwise not have been made. Also, the success of these two films, I'm betting, has probably provided for a substantial increase in your subscriptions. It is a shame that such a fine publication must unjustly criticize those who contribute so much.

Murray Robinson
Mobile, Alabama

Our gratitude doesn't extend to placing Spielberg and Lucas above criticism.

CREDIT FOR E.T. WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

After reading the Carlo Rambaldi interview [13:2/13:3:22], I'm beginning to see why people like Rick Baker distrust him so. On the basis of the interview we are lead to believe that E.T. was primarily a mechanical device with humans used only in certain walking shots. Nowhere does Rambaldi say that talented mime Caprice Rothe was E.T.'s hands and arms for 95% of the film. Now this may be a cause where the interviewer just didn't ask the right questions, but no where in any Rambaldi interview does he fully acknowledge Caprice Rothe's immense contribution to the believability of E.T.

It's a real shame that such an obviously talented guy like Rambaldi seems to consistently deny credit to those who deserve it.

Shawn Morgan
Waterbury, Connecticut

CORRECTIONS:

In our article on RETURN OF THE JEDI (13:4:15) we incorrectly stated that R2D2 releases Han Solo from his freeze-dried tomb at the beginning of the movie. Actually, Solo is set free by Princess Leia, disguised as a bounty hunter named Boushh.

In our article "There's No Thing Like an Old THING" (13:2/13:3:59) we omitted credit for photographer Lee Forbes, who took the photo of director Christian Nyby, William Self and Ken Tobey shown at the top of page 59.

We regret our errors.

Article reveals plot of new 'Jedi' film

Lucasfilm executives in an uproar, but claim magazine story 'full of hearsay, innuendo'

By David Chute
Herald staff writer

Executives at Lucasfilm Ltd., George Lucas' Marin-based production company, are outraged over a sci-fi magazine article that purportedly reveals important plot information about "Return of the Jedi" and a photograph of a new Lucas creature.

Susan Tremblay, a marketing assistant with Lucasfilm, said the company is not currently contemplating legal action against "Cinefantastique," which will publish the story in its April-May edition. "But we are upset about it. The article is full of hearsay and innuendo. There are many things in it which are not true." (A spokesman at 20th Century-Fox, which will release the movie in

May, referred all questions to Lucasfilm.)

Cinefantastique's editor and publisher, Frederick S. Clarke, who wrote the article about the third installment of the "Star Wars" saga, refused to say how he obtained the information about the "Jedi" plot other than citing a "source close to the production." He also refused to comment on whether or not he had the script.

"We've never said that we had a script," Clarke said by phone from the magazine's headquarters in Oak Park, Ill. "The article doesn't allude to a script. It says what is in the script. Having a script would be illegal. People were legally bound not to give them out. And there are many other ways we could have obtained this information. There are people who worked on the

movie who never saw a script, but who know the plot just the same — because they were there the whole time. Lucasfilm is just upset because what we've said about the movie is right on the mark."

The plot details referred to in the article concern Darth Vader overcoming the dark side of the force and dying in a supreme act of self-sacrifice that saves the rebel alliance. Although Vader is physically dead, the spirit of the Jedi master who was once Luke's father returns in ghostly form.

In addition, accompanying the article is a photograph of heretofore top-secret furry creatures, called Ewoks, which will appear in the movie. The caption under the photo reads, "'Ewoks' design is George Lucas' attempt to corner the lucrative teddy-bear toy market, and is being kept top secret." Although admitting that the marketing claim made in the caption is "pure supposition," Clarke said "that the merchandising of characters from the 'Star Wars' films has generated more income, almost, than the films themselves. And there is some lead time in the production of toys."

'Jedi' / C-2, Col. 4

Los Angeles Herald Examiner, March 23

THE NATIONAL PRESS TAKES NOTICE

Overreaction by executives at Lucasfilm at our RETURN OF THE JEDI story (13:4:15) backfired, spreading facts they sought to keep secret to millions of readers.

New York Post, March 28

From Mr. Darth to Mr. Clean

HOLLYWOOD — Darth Vader as the hero of *The Return of the Jedi*?

That's one of the alleged plot details revealed by science-fiction fan magazine Cinefantastique in its new issue — details that George Lucas' LucasFilm dismisses as "sheer speculation."

The magazine brings to light a parcel of plot information (Darth sacrifices his life to save his son Luke and the Rebel Alliance), a few sketches of a fuzzy top-secret character named Ewoks, and the fact that three endings to the movie were filmed.

The magazine claims this information was gathered by a source close to the production.

Although LucasFilm admits that three endings were filmed, its marketing assistant Susan Tremblay says: "We're not that upset about the scenes they mentioned. They were incorrect about the plot. None of that was in our script."

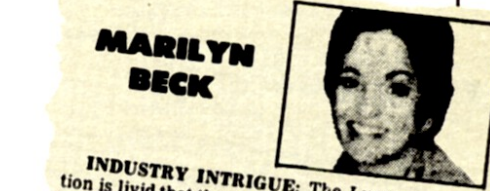
"At this point, it's all speculation," she adds. George shot a number of scenes in several different ways. Nobody except

George knows how things will turn out.

"It is unfortunate that the sketches of the Ewoks appeared. They were going to be our surprise for the audience, the way Yoda was our surprise in the last movie [*The Empire Strikes Back*]."

As for Vader's martyrdom? Luke's fate? The status of the Rebel Alliance? Only George Lucas knows for sure — and he won't comment until after the movie is released in May.

SCREEN SCOOPS
By ED NAHA



MARILYN BECK

INDUSTRY INTRIGUE: The Lucas organization is livid that the ending of "Return of the Jedi" has leaked out—and into the pages of a forthcoming edition of Cinefantastique magazine. It's determined to find the spy within its midst. The Lucas and 20th Century-Fox admit some of the secrets that the publication (with a large following of sci-fi buffs and movie cultists) is giving away are right on target, but also insist, as one executive puts it, "There are several glaring instances where the information is blatantly erroneous." Of course, we won't know which is which until "Jedi" blasts off into theaters on May 25.

New York Daily News, March 30

'Star Wars' Makers Have Troubles Keeping New Movie's Plot a Secret

but the hot news leaked anyway. The April May issue of a small, fantasy film fan magazine called Cinefantastique disclosed the movie's major plot surprise, which involves arch-villain Darth Vader. The Oak Park, Ill., magazine won't say exactly how it got the scoop, but it does say Fox promptly canceled an ad for another film in the next issue.

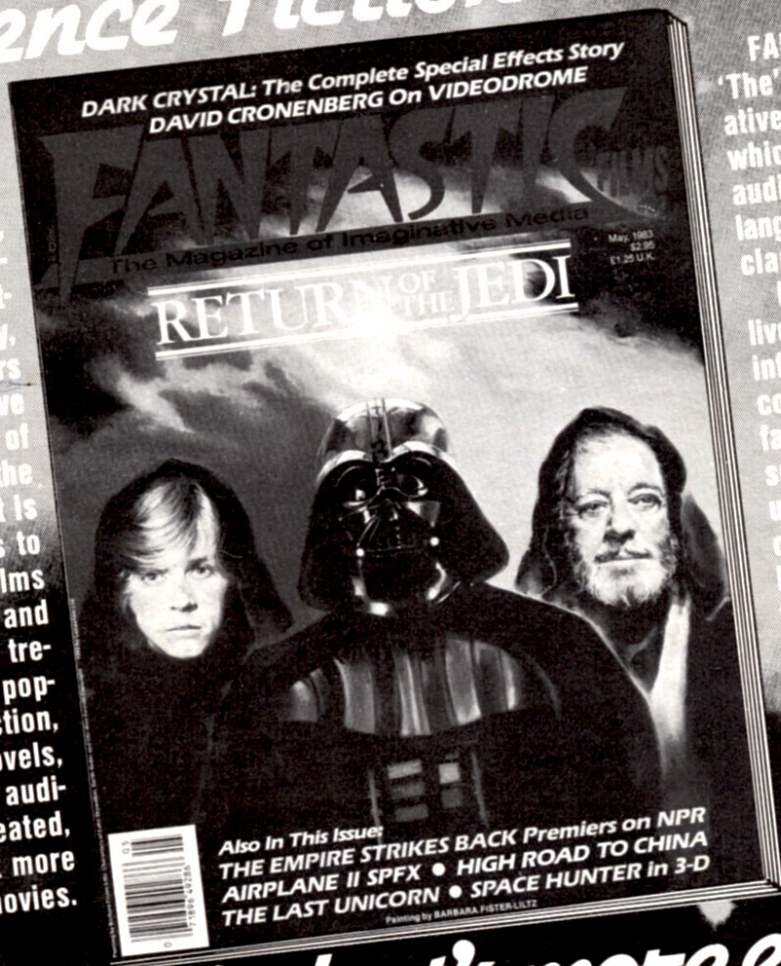
Several newspapers ran stories based on the Cinefantastique piece, and the New York Post ran a summary of the plot, which involves the good guys launching an all-out assault on the evil Galactic Empire. Among other events, the film's hero becomes a Jedi knight, one of the mystical, intergalactic warriors who rely on an inner spiritual strength called The Force.

And to top it off, some stores late last week started selling the Marvel Comics version of "Jedi," it away until May 25. But if "Return of the Jedi" does miserably as well as its predecessors, its creators probably can live with their anguish over all this. Lucasfilm says "Star Wars" and "The Empire Strikes Back" accounted for \$88 million in worldwide ticket sales—and an additional \$1.5 billion in merchandise sales.

The Wall Street Journal, May 12

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